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SONS OF GOD
AND
OTHER SERMONS

JULIAN C. McPHEETERS

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SONS OF GOD

By

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Tucson, Arizona

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Julian C. McPheeters
Tucson, Arizona

DEDICATION

This book of sermons is affectionately dedicated to my wife, who for fifteen years has been my faithful companion in the ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

JULIAN C. MCPHEETERS

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FOREWORD

The chapters of this book consist of a series of sermons delivered by the author at the University Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Tucson, Arizona, during the year 1928.

We have endeavored to exalt the high privileges of sonship as found through Jesus Christ our Lord. The Christian faith gives the uplifted face which sees the sun beyond the clouds.

In our rich heritage as "Sons of God" we are vested with unlimited resources. Vast are the attainments within our reach. The path of the righteous is the path of conquest and victory.

We are of royal birth. When living up to our heritage, we need make no apologies to the world. The "Sons of God" have the assurance in the words of Paul, "For all things are yours; . . . . things present, or things to come; all are yours."

God has committed to His children the task of making the kingdoms of this world, the kingdoms of our Lord and Christ. We are engaged in a glorious crusade. The Captain of our salvation leads to certain victory.

These sermons are sent forth with the earnest prayer that they may do some little toward quickening a deeper consciousness of our filial relationship to the Heavenly Father.

JULIAN C. MCPHEETERS

Tucson, Arizona,
March, 1929.

SONS OF GOD

CHAPTER I

SONS OF GOD

Text: "*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*" Rom. 8:14.

The Christian's badge to the world is that of a son of God. Upon seeing this badge the world at once turns a scrutinizing eye to find the marks of sonship. These marks are clearly discernible. The way-faring man, though a fool, may read them. Some of these marks are clearly set forth in the first half of the eighth chapter of Romans from which the text is taken.

In the first verse of the chapter we find these words: "There is therefore no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."

Condemnation is a universal mal-

ady of the human race. Adam and Eve lost their pristine purity because they sinned. At once they became conscious of their nude bodies, and "they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons." God is no longer to them a welcome guest. They would flee from His presence. They have sinned against Him. "And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden."

While the race is still in its infancy we find a man who is a fugitive. The cry of his soul is expressed in the words: "I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth." Why these words from this distressed soul? None of the modern methods for overtaking a fugitive can be set upon his trail. No highly organized detective system as we have to-day can catch him in its meshes. No telephone, telegraph, or wireless can intercept him in his flight. The virgin world with all of its unin-

habited areas lies out before him. Hiding places are on every hand and yet he cannot hide. Cain, the first murderer, is a fugitive crying as he goes, "My punishment is greater than I can bear." He is a condemned soul driven by the lash of an accusing conscience. His brother's blood crieth out from the ground. The black mark of condemnation stamped upon his soul is of a deeper dye than the physical mark which God stamped upon his body.

One of the old prophets asked this question: "Can the leper change his spots or the Ethiopian his skin?" He spoke these words of the human soul—the soul spotted with sin and blackened with rebellion against God. This soul is pierced with the thorn of condemnation but has no hands of sufficient strength to lift the thorn.

In that immortal allegory by John Bunyan we hear Christian who is pressed with a heavy burden, crying out, "What shall I do?" Christian flees from the city of destruction, puts aside the jeers or pityings of his neighbors,

struggles on through the slough of despond, is instructed and comforted at the interpreter's gate, but he does not lose his burden until at the Cross.

Multitudes have been able to sing:

"At the cross, at the cross where I first saw the light,
And the burden of my heart roll'd away,
It was there by faith I receiv'd my sight,
And now I am happy all the day!"

The world is full of people who have everything that can possibly gratify the senses. They live in palaces and sleep on beds of ivory. But their sleep is not always sweet and their pleasures unmixed with the thorn. Grave forebodings at times overshadow the soul. They cry, "Peace, peace!", when there is no peace. They seek to purchase with money that which money cannot buy. They struggle hard to climb the ladder of fame, and when they reach the top round, find that for which they had been climbing is not

there. They join in society's gay swirl, and revel in her fawning flatteries. And here again they are disappointed like the man in quest of the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

Only the Master who calmed the tempests can calm the unrest of troubled souls. He cancels the sentence of death, and sets the captives free. Men are then able to say:

"I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

Man is the meeting point for two seas—the physical and the spiritual. Each sea strives for the mastery and control of the other. God is a Spirit and we may expect to find the dominance of the spiritual in His sons. Therefore, we are not surprised when we read that His sons "walk not after the flesh."

The flesh for the present is the temple of the soul. A house that is a proper dwelling place must be kept in order. It must be kept swept and garnished and in proper repair. A house

filthy and unsanitary is not worthy the dwelling place of a human being who has been created a little lower than the angels.

A house in the countryside left alone may soon become the habitation of bats, owls, and reptiles. The roof becomes leaky, the window shutters fall off, and the panes are broken. Wasps and poisonous insects find it a fit place in which to build their nests. Dame Superstition takes advantage of the physical depletion and spreads strange and weird rumors of ghosts that inhabit the place. Behold the desolation of the house that goeth its own way without human control.

This house of human flesh is easily susceptible to undesirable inhabitants. In the Epistle to the Galatians, Paul says, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like:

of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Here we have a whole swarm of evil inhabitants eager to inhabit the human body and infest the soul. The man who depends on his own strength alone finds himself hopeless against all these evil adversaries. For the sake of decency and respectability, he may be able to keep some of the grosser adversaries out, but he is helpless to keep them all out.

The works of the flesh unbridled ripen on from iniquity to iniquity. They lead to the rattlesnake dens of vice, where evil has the hiss of a serpent, and the very atmosphere is laden with the odors of deadly venom. They lead to the cess pool of disease and unspeakable shame, an horrible pit, from which no man can dig himself. In his efforts to rise he will find himself sinking deeper amid the stench. His every failure is a pathetic cry for a savior. This cry has not been unheeded in the divine economy. A savior sufficient

for all the needs of man has been provided. St. John speaks in his gospel, saying, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become sons of God, even to them that believe on His name."

The sons of God have a different walk. They "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

There is no evil in the flesh as such. All of the physical passions and senses of man were ordained for a purpose. Channeled within the will of God, they become stepping stones on which we rise to heights sublime. In them are to be found the foundation stones of home, motherhood, fatherhood, and the holy things which make for the highest good of man.

God had laid down certain laws governing our physical appetites and propensities. These are for the highest good of God and man. Their repression is for the purpose of bringing man to his highest expression. The

Spirit leads man into spheres of large liberties which are in harmony with the law of God. On the other hand, the liberty of the flesh will lead to the bondage of the flesh. The way of the transgressor is the way of increasing bondage.

The fruit of the Spirit is set in contrast to the works of the flesh. Immediately following Paul's enumeration of the works of the flesh we have these words: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." These are the beautiful graces of sonship which adorn the soul.

Love heads the list of the graces. The love spoken of here is the divine "Agapee," and is exotic to the heart of man. This love cometh from on high. It was about this love that Henry Drummond wrote his great essay entitled, "The Greatest Thing in the World." It is the love of sacrifice and unselfishness. In another place Paul speaks of this love, saying: "Doth not

behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." Joy is the badge of sunshine worn by the sons of God. In the city of Tucson we have a Sunshine Club. This club spends tens of thousands of dollars every year to tell America about "The Sunshine City." It is the business of the sons of God to spread heavenly sunshine. Our gospel is the gospel of good cheer. Peace, deep and lasting, amid the turmoils of life is a quest of the human soul. This peace is found only in God. It is the peace that "passeth all understanding." It is the quiet in the bosom of the deep when the storm is rolling mighty billows upon the surface. Of this peace the poet has written:

"When earthly cares and sorrows roll
Like ocean billows o'er my soul,
No tempest can my barque control
If thou wilt only bring peace to my soul."

Longsuffering is the grace of endur-

ance. It is this that has enabled the sons of God to endure fiery trials, mockings, scourgings, bonds, and imprisonment. John Bunyan, spending twelve years in the dungeon of a Bedford jail, instead of being crushed to earth never to rise again, immortalizes himself in writing "Pilgrim's Progress." Gentleness! Where in this cold and sordid world can we find gentleness? We find it in the stroke of a mother's hand on the brow of her sick child. It is in the southern zephyrs laden with the aroma of spring. It is in the voice of the dove that cooes over the nest of her young, rocked like a cradle in the bough of the tree. O gentleness! Thou art among the fairest of the graces of the soul.

No higher tribute can be written upon any grave than this, "He was a good man," or "She was a good woman." Goodness is a very strong word, since the word "God" is a contraction of "good," and means the very essence of good. Goodness is a very comprehensive word, and is the converging center of

all graces. The grace of faith is that which characterized the great galaxy of souls, of which we read in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews—the Westminster Abbey of the Bible. Of these souls we read, "Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of aliens." The climactic grace in the character of Moses was meekness. Without a doubt Moses was in his day the greatest man of the earth intellectually and educationally, having been schooled in all of the works of the Egyptians. Yet we read of this man, "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth." John Fletcher, the brilliant scholar of early Methodism, was wonderful for his meekness. When John Wesley preached the funeral of this brilliant man, he said: "There lies in that coffin the most saintly man I

ever saw, and I never expect to see another such till I go to glory." Temperance is the last of the nine graces mentioned, which means self-government in harmony with the law of God. Temperance is the steering wheel for all the other graces, which keeps you in the middle of the road. There are ten thousand side tracks along the journey of life, but temperance keeps you on the main line.

Sonship has its language. The apostle says: "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, 'Abba, Father!'" Abba translated means father. So the cry of the son is "Father, Father!" Slaves were not permitted to use the term father or mother in addressing their masters or mistresses. Slaves unto sin cannot use the filial language of Father, in speaking of God. Adoption was a frequent act among the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans. The act of adoption bestowed all of the privileges of sonship. The adopted child can say,

"Father," and the Father can say, "My Son." Protection, love, and companionship are found in fatherhood. Fatherless children lack a father's protection. They do not have his strong arm to shield them. Large estates may dwindle into insignificance within a few years when the father's hand is taken away. Fatherless children may be heard crying for their father. They say this and that would not have happened had our father been here.

The sons of God have a Father whose protection will never be withdrawn. He is the unchanging Father through all the ages. Empires may crumble and pass, civilizations may rise and fall, but our Heavenly Father remains. He is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. He lavishes His love upon His children. Even His chastisements are expressions of His love, for He has said in his Holy Word: "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chastiseth and scourgeth every son whom

he receiveth." None can take the place of a father's companionship in the home. The sad tragedy in many a home has been where that companionship was broken by the hand of death. The mother struggled on with the children and did the best she could. But alas, that vacant chair, and that hushed voice! When the winter evenings grew long, there was none that could take his place about the fireside. But our Heavenly Father has promised to be a father to the fatherless. Our companionship with him is blessed. It is sweet to know that his companionship can never be broken by "death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature," so long as we hold the clasp of his hand.

Sonship has its witness. No son is left in doubt as to whose son he is, and who is his father. By gifts and manifestations, the father gives evidence to the son of his sonship. So also the Heavenly Father gives unmistaken

evidence to His sons of their sonship. This evidence is vouchsafed by his Spirit. We read in his word: "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God." This witness is given as an inward consciousness. The Spirit brings the message of the Father, saying: "Thou art my son. I have adopted thee into the family of God."

The adopted child becomes an heir. The child that is homeless and penniless may become rich through adoption. So the sons of God become heirs. Again we read in his word: "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ."

My friends, to become an heir of the great God of this universe reaches far beyond our fondest dreams. Who is our God? What has he wrought? What may we expect of Him? He has stretched out the heavens like a scroll, and has dotted it with the starry firmaments. Man's wildest imagination has not been able to grasp the immensity of His universe. On the planet

Neptune, one year is equivalent to 164 of our years on earth. We have comets that visit the earth only once in two thousand years, and yet with more precision than the clock of the best clocksmith. Man boasts of a speed of two hundred miles an hour on motorcycles and in airplanes. But the sun with all the solar system moves through space at the rate of twelve miles per second which is 720 miles per minute, or 43,200 miles per hour. Our God has created the earth which is one of the very smallest of all the spheres which he has placed in His firmament. But what a world is this in which to live! I do not wonder that John Burroughs exclaimed in the presence of the Yosemite Falls, "O, Almighty God!" Through long millenniums he prepared for the coming of man. He hid away in the bosom of the earth great storehouses of coal, and immense reservoirs of oil. For long ages he made the earth a great belching furnace, that he might filter out precious metals and store them away in hidden pockets for the future

use of man. He pushed up the mountains out of the deep, marked off the rivers, and planted the primeval forests. He carpeted the earth with green and fertilized the valleys for the future crops of man. He made the rays of the sun a great hydraulic pump with which to draw the waters of the lakes, oceans, and rivers into the heavens, to fall again and irrigate the earth. He tossed from the tips of his creative fingers the forked lightnings upon the storm clouds, which were to eventually be harnessed by man to run the wheels of modern industry. Yea, what is there that our God hath not wrought? There is nothing in the heaven of heavens or in the earth beneath that he hath not made. By him and for him are all things, for the purpose of "bringing many sons unto glory." We are "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ."

CHAPTER II

THE CALL OF YOUTH

**Text*: "*Let no man despise thy youth.*" I Tim. 4:12.

One of the debated questions of the day is the moral status of youth. The question has its ardent supporters on both sides. We sometimes speak of youth as though it were a separate and distinct generation from the present generation of adults. We speak as though youth were born on a certain day, and all adults were born on another day. This happens not to be the case. The life of youth dovetails into the life of the elders. If there is a rebellion of youth, there must first be a rebellion of the elders. If there is crime

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*This sermon was preached before the graduating class of the Tucson High School, May 20, 1928, and first appeared in print in the "Nashville Christian Advocate."

among youth, it may be traceable to crime among the elders.

If we turn to the bad among the youth of the land, we will find more of it than ever in the history of this nation. But if we turn to the good we will also find more of that than ever in the history of the nation. I believe that the proportion of the good over the bad is greater in the youth of to-day than that of any preceding generation.

The apostle Paul threw down a distinct challenge to Timothy when he said: "Let no man despise thy youth." Youth is the golden day of opportunity when voices call to the soul. The graduating class of the Tucson High School is now passing an important mile post on the journey of life. A number of roads converge at this mile post leading out across the plains of life. Each road has its sign post, carrying on it the lure of its invitation. Some of the roads are good, and some are bad. Some lead to the sun-lit hills of God, where dwelleth peace, happiness, and true success. There are others whose

beginnings are enticing, but lead at last to the dark valley where dwelleth heart aches, remorse, and despair.

On one of the sign boards at this mile post you will see skyscraper buildings, banks, railroads, steamship lines, large manufacturing plants, and broad acres of fertile land, with crops ripening unto the golden harvest. The call of this way is "*The Call of Wealth.*"

What shall we say of wealth with her enticing invitation? She comes with music in her voice and sweet perfume upon her breath. Her tresses are gilded with gold; her fingers sparkle with the richest jewels; and her step is as graceful as the Olympic Nymphs.

Is she good or is she evil? What is wealth? Wealth is an *Artist*—purchasing the master paintings of the world and hanging them in the great art galleries where rich and poor may enjoy them alike. She is a *Merchant*—propelling the ships of commerce across the seas and threading the nation with great continental railroads. She is a *Master-Mechanic*— with an inventive

genius that brings to man all of his labor-saving devices, enabling one man to do the work of ten. She is a *Husbandman*—cultivating broad acres of land and finding new and improved methods of agriculture. She is a *Manufacturer*—driving the wheels of industry and furnishing employment to multiplied thousands. She is the *Scholar's Patron*—endowing great colleges and universities and establishing foundations for travel and research.

With such fruits as these, surely wealth cannot be called intrinsically evil. Riches serve or rule us as fire in our houses. Fire under proper control adds comfort to the house. Out of this control, it destroys the house. Do not begin life with the false assumption that when you are purse-rich you will be heart-rich. The man who becomes rich at the expense of his soul, is loser. Suppose a man goes forth to collect an art gallery of great paintings, but every time he secures a painting he pays for it in the loss of a portion of his eye sight. When at last

his gallery is full he cannot behold a single painting. He has paid a fearful price. He is blind. It is thus that some men secure wealth at the price of soul values. When at last his barns and houses are all full, and his soul says: "Have thine ease," God says to him: "Thou Fool." Death has come and his soul is spiritually blind. He has no eyes with which to see the beautiful gate.

Will the great wealth of America prove her undoing? Will we fall like nations of the past upon the two edged blade of great riches and intellectual genius, which we hold in our hands, and commit suicide? America to-day is the richest nation that has ever existed in any age of the world's history. In 1860 the taxable wealth of the United States was fifteen billion dollars. In 1928 our taxable wealth was three hundred and seventy-five billions of dollars, which was an increase of twenty-five fold within the short period of fifty seven years. The hand of providence has dealt bountifully with us in the

bestowal of natural resources. Europe is credited with 35,000 miles of river, but there are 35,000 miles of navigable river in the Mississippi system alone. We have enough arable land in the United States capable of supporting a billion people by agriculture alone. We have four-fifths of the known coal area of the world in the United States. One-half of the railway mileage of the entire world is in our country. These immense resources are to be turned over to the youth of to-day. With this great wealth you may make America "the Big Brother" among nations. You may use it to relieve the cause of distress and suffering which comes from less fortunate people. You may use it to break down prejudices and misunderstandings among the nations and bring in an age of universal good will. On the other hand you may use this great wealth in accumulating still more wealth. You may hoard it to yourselves and cherish it in your bosoms. You may become a Shylock in your souls and cry for a pound of flesh.

If we selfishly squander this wealth upon ourselves, our very wealth will inspire other nations to form leagues against us. These leagues will look upon the wealth of America with jealous eye, as did the hordes of northern Europe upon Rome, in the day of her glory. The future of America will depend upon the way we use our great wealth. To use it selfishly upon ourselves to the neglect of others will be suicidal.

Just across the way is another road on which stands a sign board with a different picture. Here are the classic halls of learning of our colleges and universities. There we see libraries filled with choicest treasures of the world's knowledge. We see the faces of the world's great poets, philosophers, and statesmen. There looks down upon us also the faces of the masters in music and art. In it all there is the call of the accumulated knowledge of the ages. This sign board has written over the top "*The Call of the Intellect.*"

Two of our sources of happiness

are the physical and the intellectual. The call of the physical is stronger in youth. The pleasure from the gratification of the physical is more acute, but is less enduring than that of the intellectual. The man who builds his happiness upon the physical will have nothing left upon which to rest, when the physical fails him. Happiness derived from the physical will decrease with the passing years. Happiness which finds its sources in the intellect will increase with the years.

Education is a process and not a finished task. The object of the school room is to properly begin the process of education which is to continue through life. This is why our graduating exercises from the schools are called "commencements."

The development of the intellect increases our range of happiness. A great organ with a wide range of stops, can still play on if perchance some sets of the pipes fail. The master organist is able to bring forth music that is wonderful, and beautiful. He sweeps

the full gamut of the diapason, and brings forth the full range of the organ's possibilities. Behold how great are the possibilities of the human intellect! Its range is far more extensive than the stops on a great organ. And yet how often we touch only the fringe of our possibilities. If we fail to develop our intellects we will be like a man playing "Yankee Doodle" or a piece of jazz on a great organ.

A lower compensation for learning is that of dollars and cents. It has been demonstrated that one hundred hours of technical study should add twenty-five cents to a man's wages. This is a small increase but it amounts to an increase of $4,500 over a period of forty years.

The United States Board of Education shows that every day spent in school pays $9.02. These are the figures given to substantiate the statement. The average of uneducated laborers in forty years earn $20,000. High School graduates earn $40,000 for the same period or twice as much. For

each of the 2,160 days of schooling in a boy's twelve years, he adds an income for life paying him $9.02.

Not quite one per cent of American men graduate from college, and yet this one per cent has given us five per cent of our presidents, fifty per cent of our senators and representatives, fifty four per cent vice-presidents, fifty two per cent secretaries of state, fifty per cent secretaries of the treasury, fifty seven per cent attorney generals, the justices of the supreme court sixty eight per cent.

We may well thank God for a new democracy which is now dawning in the fields of education. We no longer consider education as necessary for only the time honored professions. But the tradesmen and day laborers have every right to an education. It has been sixty-nine years since Henry Ward Beecher spoke these prophetic words concerning education: "One of the things which our age and which this land has to develop is the compatibility of manual labor with real refinement and educa-

tion. This is to be one of the problems of the age. We must show that knowledge is not the monopoly of the professions, not the privilege of wealth, not the prerogative of leisure, but that knowledge and refinement belong to the hard working men as much as to any other class of men, and I hope to see the day when there will be educated laborers, educated mechanics, educated farmers and ship-masters; for we must carry out into practice our theory of men's equality, and of common worth in matters of education." Each passing year is carrying us nearer the goal of which the great preacher spoke.

Knowledge is rapidly on the increase. A door of wide opportunity has been offered to every boy and girl in the land through our splendid High Schools, which now dot all of the rural sections as well as the cities. Six times as many students are in college to-day as were thirty years ago. The Junior College is now spreading over the land with a rapidity akin to that of the High Schools of a decade ago. Within the

next twenty-five years we may expect every city of fifty thousand inhabitants to have its Junior College. It will then take but one step to raise all of these Junior Colleges to A-grade colleges. College graduates will then be more numerous than the High School graduates of to-day.

On another road at this intersection is a sign board containing scenes which stir the soul. High over all the pictures waves Old Glory, which has never been trailed in the dust of defeat of any war. Beneath the flag is the grand old Liberty Bell, which pealed forth in thunderous tones the birth of a nation. Clustered about the bell are familiar faces—George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson. These names are immortal; they will live through the succeeding ages. In the background of the picture stands the National Capitol, the White House, and the Congressional Library. In another part of the picture we see the Declaration of Independence, and

the Constitution of the United States. Written at the top of the picture are the words, "*The Call of my Country.*"

America is the queen of nations. She is the answer to the heart throb of the centuries. She was born amid the travail of blood. She was schooled in her infancy amid poverty and hardships. Discipline, integrity, and nobility were the watchwords of her early training. As she grew to her maturity she became the fairest nation among the sons of men. Her name went out through all the earth, as the synonym of righteousness, justice, and liberty. Men came from afar to see her and as they beheld said: "The half has not been told."

But the queen shows signs of infectious diseases. Her complexion is not quite so fair and some of the luster of her eye has faded.

Crime in America is rapidly on the increase. In the United States we have one murder every seventy hours, and one suicide every eighteen hours. We have more murders in the United

States than in all the rest of the world. Crime costs us four times more than the total amount we spend for wheat, wool, and coal. We spend more for crime each year than the combined cost of all our religious and educational enterprises.

The age of criminals is on the descending scale. The average age of all prisoners in the United States ten years ago was thirty-two. The average age of all prisoners to-day is twenty-two. More than one half of all criminals to-day are under nineteen years of age.

We are laboring under obsolete laws which impede justice. In Germany eighty per cent of all murderers are punished, while in the United States only two per cent of the murderers are punished. In the last six months of 1927 more young men and women under twenty-one were locked up in prison than the five years from 1910 to 1915.

The breakdown of respect for law in a nation is the first forerunner of disintegration. This malady checked

in time—the nation will be saved. But all history teaches that if it is allowed to run unhindered, it will destroy the nation as certain as the cancer will destroy the human body.

Our nation needs to-day more statesmen and less politicians. We need more law makers and less law breakers. We need more defenders of the Constitution—the greatest secular document ever penned by man—and less violators of this constitution.

We have been throwing away the traditional moral standards of this nation without finding some better thing to take their place. A man who takes a house from a rock foundation and places it on quicksand is an enemy of society. Methods may change, but there are fundamental verities which will never change. The surveyor of to-day does not use the same transit that the surveyor did of fifty years ago. He has found new and improved methods. But in the face of improved methods, a straight line remains the shortest distance between two points,

and two parallel lines do not intersect. So in morals there are certain eternal verities. We cannot treat these verities with laxity and go unpunished as a nation. We may have become rich and increased with goods. We may become more learned and cultured. But this solemn fact still remains true: "The wages of sin is death."

We turn to another picture beside the road. In the midst is the hill of calvary. On the summit of that hill is an old rugged cross—nailed to that cross is the Son of God. A platted crown of thorns rests upon his head, and blood is streaming from his pierced hands and feet. At the foot of the cross are written these words: "God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Over to the left of the cross is an old-fashioned home, and on the center table in that home rests an old fashioned book well worn with thumb prints. On up the way from this old fashioned home stands "the

church in the valley by the wildwood," the sound of whose bell is a summons to a place of prayer. Over to the right of the cross, there can be seen in the distance, a city four square. It is the city which John saw from the Isle of Patmos. Her walls are of jasper, and her gates are of pearl, and they who enter find no night there. At the top of the picture are written the words: "*The Call of God.*"

The road on which we find "*The Call of God*" is more than a way. It is a highway. The prophet Isaiah had a vision of which he said: "And a highway shall be there, and a way." This highway is the grand trunk line of the soul. It is wider and more inclusive than any of the others. It includes every worthy and noble call. The sign boards which we found at the entrance of the other ways, may be found at the entrance of this way also. The call of wealth may not be incompatible with "*The Call of God.*" History furnishes abundant examples of men of wealth, who regarded their riches as

a sacred trust. Such men have been benefactors of the race, and true servants of God. In like manner a multitude of the world's greatest scholars have been humbled, instead of exalted by their learning. With the faith of a simple child, they have found the way to the foot of the cross, and there have worshipped. Of patriots and statesmen we find not a few, who heard "*The Call of God*" along with "*The Call of Country.*" The immortal Gladstone who is a noble representative of this group, will be remembered for his godly piety along with his statecraft. Washington alone in prayer at Valley Forge, Abraham Lincoln kneeling with a Methodist Bishop in the north, and Stonewall Jackson leading his invincible army in worship in the south, and more recently, Woodrow Wilson calling his cabinet to prayer amid the crucial days of the world war—these are scenes which should never depart from the minds of our American youth.

We read of a man who lived a long time ago, whose name was Enoch.

Of this man it was written: "Enoch walked with God." We know what it means to take a walk with a friend, but here is something quite different. Life wears a different meaning to the man who takes God into account. He hears voices that other men do not hear. He sees things that other men do not see. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." Up-lifted mountains are shrines which speak to him hidden secrets. The song of the birds in the early morning comes to him as a part of the notes of praise of the heavenly choir. To him the stars declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth forth the handiwork of the Almighty. The glorious dawning of each new day is a harbinger to his soul of the final resurrection morning where the sun goeth not down. Each setting sun throwing back her floods of glory upon a many colored sky, whispers to him profound secrets of the time when his own life's sun will drop behind the western hills, but to rise on eternal shores.

My young friends, Jesus Christ is the guide of the ages. He has charted every sea and has traversed every path. He knows the danger points which lie out before you. He is able to guide you through. As you begin the long road of the future leading out from this commencement occasion, may you be able to say,

"Jesus, Savior, pilot me,
Over life's tempestuous seas;
Unknown waves before me roll,
Hiding rock and treacherous shoal;
Chart and compass come from thee;
Jesus, Savior, pilot me."

CHAPTER III

THE RICHES OF GOD

Text: "*O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out.*" Rom. 11:33.

The eleventh chapter of Romans is like a great highway winding to the summit of a majestic mountain. On the way station at the foot of the mountain are these words: "Hath God cast away his people?" On the summit of the mountain we find the words of the text: "O the depths of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" The highway of divine reasoning in the mind of the apostle reaches from the valley of despair to the summit of exaltation. "Hath God cast away his people?" We

are not surprised at the Jews raising such a question. For long centuries they had been the chosen nation of God. The Ark of the Covenant had been intrusted unto the Jews. They were the custodians of Jehovah's church.

But a new thing has come to pass in the earth. The gospel is offered as freely to the Gentiles as unto the Jews. The observance of the old Jewish ritual is no longer considered essential, and the question is raised: "Hath God cast away his people?" Paul shows in this chapter that the Jews have not been cast away. The gospel is a fulfillment of the Jewish law. The many sacrifices under the old law pointed to the gospel dispensation. The old Jewish church was a forerunner of the gospel church. The glory of the Jews is no longer to be found in the temple and its elaborate ritual and ceremonies, but in Jesus Christ who died for both Jew and Gentile, and became the great high priest for all men. As Paul reasons of the universal grace of God, and salvation which is extended unto all men,

he breaks forth in the exclamation: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!"

The material riches of God and the riches of his grace are complementary to each other. His material riches are prophetic and emblematic of His grace. Physical phenomena is used constantly in the Bible to portray spiritual truths. We may therefore behold the great material riches of God to the profit of our souls.

"The earth is full of thy riches," is the declaration of the Psalmist. All of the material resources of man come from the earth. Any great modern city represents fabulous sums of wealth. Hundreds of skyscraper buildings, each housing a small city during the business day, lift their windowed stories into the smoky atmosphere. Vaulted banks behind barred windows hold precious treasures worth hundreds of millions of dollars. Stores of every conceivable kind are filled with merchandise and wares which have been brought from the ends of the earth.

The turnover in merchandise for a single day represents an astounding figure. Automobiles, bus lines, street cars, and interurban railways jam the streets like an interminable throng. The vehicles of transportation, along with the thousands of miles of pavement over which they travel, represent another staggering sum of wealth. In one section of the city may be found miles and miles of flats and tenement houses. The rent of these buildings for a single day mounts into the millions. In another section may be found homes, homes, homes. These homes are of every type and description. They range all the way from the bungalow to the mansion costing many millions. These multiplied thousands of homes represent another staggering sum of wealth. But added to this are the manufacturing plants whose buildings cover thousands of acres, and whose employees may be numbered by the tens of thousands. The wages of these employees for a single day represents an immense fortune.

Man often boasts of this great wealth and calls it his own. But in this he is mistaken. All of the wealth of a great city comes from the earth. Man has only drawn it from her bosom and assimilated it as you see it in a great city. There is not one single thing of buildings, merchandise, or goods that did not come from the earth. It was she who produced all of the storehouses of food for the sustenance of life. From her sands, clays, and quarries came the materials for all the buildings. From her mines came all the precious metals, used for mediums of exchange, and the ores from which machinery is made. From her pastures came the sheep, producing garments of wool, and from her fields flax and cotton, producing garments of cotton and linen. From her rivers and lakes comes the water supply that nourishes the city. It is from the riches of the earth that the city draws its wealth, and "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof and they that dwell therein." But we have spoken of the wealth of only a single city.

Add to this the wealth of the thousands of great cities on the earth; then add to this all the rural wealth of the earth; and then add to this all of the natural resources yet untouched by man and what do we have? We have something of the depths of the riches of God.

Beauty is a part of God's riches. We read in Ecclesiastes: "He hath made everything beautiful in his time." Order and beauty are two of the wonders of the universe. God is the master painter. With His brush He tints the gray dawn of morning, and paints the glories of the evening sky. God is the master landscape gardener. He designed the cedars of Lebanon, and planted the roses of Sharon. All of the changing panoramas of earth were sketched by his hand. He is the master designer of beautiful dress. Behold the lilies of the field, for Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Behold the beauty in the dress of the fowls of the air! Their plumage of many colors eclipses the most gorgeous fabrics woven

by man. God was not content with painting beauty in the sky, and clothing his creation with beauty on the earth, but he bottled it up and stored it away in the depths of the earth. If some arch enemy should come and destroy the beauties of earth and sky, God would still have great storehouses of beauty hidden away in the earth. In these storehouses man finds the precious jewels of rubies, sapphires, and diamonds. The beauty of God himself is reflected in the beauty of His universe.

The material riches of God are inexhaustible. Solomon said: "Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun because though a man labor to seek it out, yet he shall not find; yea farther: though a wise man seek to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it." It is not difficult to exhaust the works of man. A man may learn everything about an automobile. He may master all of its mechanism, and know the function of all its parts.

Anything that man has made can be mastered by man. But this is not true with the works of God. His works are inexhaustible.

Alexander the Great died of a broken heart because there were no more worlds to conquer. But little did Alexander dream of the worlds that he had not conquered. To-day we know of worlds that he knew nothing of. Each of the natural sciences furnishes a world within itself. Each is inexhaustible. No man can master all of the facts of the universe and then get a patent on his knowledge. We do not only have many different worlds that are inexhaustible, but we are constantly finding new worlds. To-day we have the world of aviation, and the world of radio, which we did not have a few years ago. Who will dare prophesy what will come to pass in these worlds within the next twenty-five years. Our great universities have scores of chairs and professorships of which the universities of fifty years ago knew nothing. The field of man's

knowledge is ever widening and expanding because the resources of God are inexhaustible.

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" In the book of First Samuel we have these words: "For the Lord is a God of knowledge and by him actions are weighed." God discerns the thoughts of men. He knoweth the secrets of the heart. There is nothing that can be hid from his eye. When the widow brought her mite, he knew that she had given more than all the rest. He only can measure true success, because he knows the capacities of men. God measures success on the use of the talents that a man has. The man who uses his one talent is a greater success in the sight of God than the man of five talents who uses only two.

God's knowledge includes a knowledge of the needs of his children. Jesus said: "For your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him." His eye scans the future. He knoweth the things that are ahead.

He goes before us to prepare the way. How often have we said: "If this or that had not happened, we do not know what we would have done." The thing that happened which meant so much to us in some great crisis did not come by accident. Our heavenly Father knew that we had need of just such things, and they were prepared beforehand.

A minister tells the story of going on a long journey. Just as he was starting a wealthy friend placed a check book in his hand, saying: "You are going on a long journey. You may need more money than you have provided. At any time you find yourself in need, I want you to check on me. The checks in this book are all signed. All you will need to do, will be to fill in the amount that you need, and cash the check." That minister went with the fullest confidence on his journey. He was comforted with the thought that whatever happened, he had all of the resources of his friend back of him. God knoweth the needs of his children

and has given them a check book on the bank of heaven, signed by his own precious promises. The child of God can fill in his need over these promises with the full assurance that the checks will be honored.

We may well use the words of the text concerning God's grace, and say: "O the depth of the riches of God's grace!" A woman who had worked in a cotton factory all of her life had never seen the ocean. It became her good fortune one day to make a trip to the beach. As the great expanse of water swept her view for the first time, with the incoming tides rolling toward the shore, she exclaimed: "At last here comes something that there is enough of!" In the grace of God we find a full sufficiency. Paul was comforted with the words: "My grace is sufficient for thee." He found God's grace sufficient for the thorn in the flesh. He found it sufficient for the storm and shipwreck of the sea, for the dungeon at Rome, and at last for the headman's ax.

C. H. Spurgeon tells the story of the benevolence of a kindhearted layman for a needy minister. Mr. Rowland Hill was given one hundred pounds by this layman to dispense to a minister who was in great need. Mr. Hill, thinking that it would be better to send the money in installments, mailed the first five pounds with an inscription on the letter, "More to follow." Within a short time another five pounds was sent with another inscription on the letter, "Still more to follow." The third installment followed in the same manner. And so it was with the fourth, fifth, and the sixth. Each installment contained the inscription, "More to follow," until all the money was sent. Thus it is with the grace of God, only that his grace will never be exhausted. We will never get the last installment.

When he pardons our sins, he says: "More to follow." He gives us victory over temptations, and says: "More to follow." When he sanctifies our hearts and fills us with the Holy Ghost, he says: "More to follow."

When he guides us down to old age, he says: "More to follow." When he takes us by the hand and begins to lead us across the dark valley of the shadow of death, he will say again: "More to follow." When at last we plant our feet upon the eternal shore and hear for the first time the song of the heavenly choir, God will still say: "More to follow."

Paul writes to the Ephesians of the riches of God's grace: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." In his grace we find the riches of his love, the riches of his pardon, and the riches of his holiness.

A noted botanist climbed one of the loftiest peaks of the Andes, and found there a volcano. The breath of the volcano gave ill-omen of the smouldering fires in the bowels of the earth. But in the midst of the desolation, in one of the rock crevices of the crater, there was blooming a beautiful flower. Some bird perchance had dropped the

seed, or it had been wafted on some wind. There it found sufficient soil for root, and it grew and blossomed amid the barrenness of the crater's rim. There is a flower that blooms amid the barrenness of earth's sin. On the crater of every life sinking into the vortex of ruin may be found the fragrance and sweetness of this flower. It is the flower of God's love that blooms with perennial beauty amid the sins of a lost race. Its fragrance is sweet incense ascending up to Heaven. Its beauty is the call of God to the soul.

Let us turn for a moment to the riches of God's pardon. We have "the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace." Alexander H. Stephens died shortly after being elected governor of Georgia. When the doctors despaired of his life, and it was known that he was dying, the great men of the state pressed about him with important documents to sign. He turned a deaf ear to each of their entreaties. He beckoned to his private secretary to go and bring an old and faded

paper from his files. It was the petition of a mother for her wayward and sinful boy who was in the penitentiary. The great men again urged him to sign their important documents, but the governor said to them: "No, the important documents can wait. I am going to sign this." They raised him up in bed, and he wrote with trembling hand across the old and faded paper, "*Pardoned*," and underneath he scrawled his name, "*Alexander H. Stephens, Governor.*" He then dropped back on his pillow and died.

The Son of God was dying upon an old rugged cross. He turned aside from the government of a universe to answer the cry of a poor thief pleading for pardon. He said to the thief: "Today thou shalt be with me in paradise." God delights to bestow the grace of his pardon upon penitent believing hearts. He has said: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." It is said that Martin Luther once had a serious illness, during

which he was approached by Satan. Satan came to his bedside with a large scroll on which were written all of the sins of his life. The devil held all of the sins up before him and said: "You are guilty of all of these. You have no hope of heaven." Luther was at first in consternation as he beheld all the sins. But he replied to the devil: "Yes, all that you say is true, but there is one inscription that you have failed to write on the scroll, 'The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.' "

We must pause in hushed adoration as we come to view the riches of God's holiness. The angels sing: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty." The Psalmist said: "The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works." God has said: "Be ye holy, for I am holy." Another scripture says: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Still another says, "That we might be partakers of his holiness." Holiness is fundamental in

the nature of God, and he craves holiness in his children. In Ephesians 1:4, we read: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." The highway of holiness is a blessed way to travel. This way has been provided for all of His children who are willing to heed the exhortation: "That ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." The soul that places all on the altar will cry out in exaltation: "O the depth of the riches of the holiness of God!" We become partakers of His pardoning grace in the complete surrender of our sins. We become partakers of His holiness in the complete consecration of our lives into His hands.

We cannot close without pausing to consider the riches of God's ways. We read in one of the Psalms: "As for God his ways are perfect." The prophet Habakkuk says: "His ways are everlasting." Isaiah in speaking of

God's ways says: "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." The ways of God are far above the ways of man. We cannot always understand. We may sometimes feel that we have many questions that we want to ask God. One of the most devout women that I have ever known said to me not long ago: "When I get to heaven I have some questions that I want to ask God." I told this good woman: "I believe that all of your questions will be answered in your triumphal ascension from earth to glory." So wondrous is going to be the ascension of his saints, I believe that most of our questions will be answered by the time we reach the pearly gate.

God can turn seeming defeat into victory. He can turn the blood of martyrs into the seed of his church. He can make the wrath of man to praise Him and turn the wisdom of the wicked into foolishness. He can make the hard-hearted Pharaoh educate the lead-

er that is to lead the children of Israel out of bondage. He can make the closed door become an open door. A missionary by the name of Barnabas Shaw went to Cape Town, Africa. The door was closed, and he was forbidden to preach in Cape Town. The missionary loaded his goods into a wagon pulled by some oxen, and he and his wife started on a journey into the interior, not knowing where they were going. They only knew that they were looking for a field of service. Wearily they traveled on day after day and week after week. On the twenty-seventh day when they camped, they discovered a band of Hottentots camping near them. They were astonished to learn from the leader of the band that they were on their way to Cape Town to secure a missionary to come and preach to them. Had either party have started a half day earlier or later they would not have met. "O the depth of the riches of his providential ways."

Man cannot always anticipate God's ways. You cannot chart His ways as

you would the ocean or a continent. It is therefore highly important that we keep the way open for God's plan and way in our lives. Let all of our plans be made flexible to the will of God. We pass this journey but once. We have but one life to live. O the tragedy to miss the way of God in this one life that we have to live!

God's way is not always the popular way. It is not always the way of wealth and splendor. The road sometimes leads across the desert instead of through the shady lanes. It sometimes leads through the valley of suffering instead of over the hills of physical vigor. This way may lead through the valley of loneliness instead of across the beautiful sunlit fields of pleasing fellowship. But, praise His Name! the way of God is the way of victory. It is the way of triumph. It is the way that leads home at last. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your

ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out."

CHAPTER IV

IN THE SECRET PLACE

Text: "*He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.*" *Psalm* 91:1.

The lengthening shadow of the mountain brings relief from the heat of the sun at the close of a summer day. A blanket of cloud with its shifting shade upon the earth brings momentary relief to foot sore travelers on the desert. As the children of Israel journeyed through the wilderness, they became weary and discouraged with the long journey. They tasted bitter waters at Marah, "And the people murmured against Moses, saying, 'What shall we drink?' " Following their experience at the bitter waters, we read, "And they came to Elim where were twelve wells of water, and three score and ten palm

trees: and they encamped there by the waters." The shade of the palms and the cooling waters from the twelve wells refreshed their spirits for the future of the journey.

God uses the shadow as a figure of His protecting care. The shadow of the spreading green tree cannot be enjoyed at a distance. The shadow benefits those who draw near. In keeping with this figure the Holy Scripture has said: "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." Where do we draw nigh to God? Where do we catch a glimpse of His holy countenance and feel the touch of His hand? It is in the secret place. It is true that we will feel His presence amid the busy marts of life, but it is because we have first found Him in the secret place.

Where are the secret places of the Lord? We will not expect to find any comfortable shade trees on the drifting sands of a burning desert. The Israelites found the shade of the ten palm trees beside the twelve springs

of water. You will not find the secret places of the Lord amid the barren sand dunes of worldliness nor the swampy morasses of vice. You will not find them in the froth and foam of society's gayeties, nor amid the luxuries of wealth, nor amid the giddy heights of high ambition.

The secret places are nestled high up among the hills of God. They are not so easily accessible as other places. They who find them must climb the road that winds the sentinel peak of faith. From the summit of this sentinel peak the heavenly panorama stretches out before you. Beautiful valleys may be seen with their gardens and orchards bearing precious fruits akin to that of the Garden of Eden.

The first part of the valley is dotted with homes. The smoke floats lazily from the chimneys and hangs like some guardian spirit across the valley. It is evening and the sun is just taking a last peep over the western peaks. The sound of many voices can be heard, rising like a mighty chorus with vi-

brant notes echoing from mountain to mountain. Men of all walks and classes throng the thoroughfares. Where are these people going? They are going to their homes. The call of a thousand hearthstones in the valley brings people from far and near. A sweet retreat awaits them after the toils of the day, in their homes. Oh, the heart throbs around these thousand hearthstones! Here hearts will be unbosomed and secrets will be told. Weary heads will find rest and discouraged hearts will find comfort. The discouragements of the day will be turned into new ambitions.

Where is the place so sacred as the innermost precincts of the home? God founded the home in the earth as His first institution. It forms the world's greatest bulwark against wreckage and ruin. It is the world's greatest kindergarten, grammar school, high school, college, and university. All substitutes for the home have proven to be a failure. There is nothing that can take the place of a mother's

love and a father's counsel. Most of the world's great men point to the home as the beginning of their greatness.

But I hear music in the valley. Songs float out on the night air ascending like sweet incense unto the stars. What are they singing? About a multitude of these hearthstones, they are singing the great old hymns of the church. The songs are mingled with voices of prayer and praise. These are homes that put God first. They recognize Him as sovereign in their lives. The children nurtured in such an atmosphere go out to bless the world. The great lawyers, doctors, authors, statesmen, and captains of industry, who came from such homes here in America, would make a good sized army. These men have never forgotten the fountains which nourished their youth. These were eternal streams which touched their souls. Home to them was a secret place of the most High. Some of them have fallen short in building such homes as nourished their youth. But they still bless God

for the old fashioned home with its Holy sanctity, and often breathe a prayer that the more modern home might more nearly approach that sacred piety found in the home of yesterday.

There are vile and unscrupulous enemies to-day who would rend the veil that shields the sanctity of the home. They would substitute companionate marriage for the holy union sponsored by Jesus Christ. They would drive away modesty and chastity, and enthrone vice and lewdness. They would feed the youth of our homes upon the sewage of obscene literature. These men with lecherous minds, who carry the poison of asps, idolize crime and vice, frown upon righteousness. They laugh and revel at broken hearts and soiled characters. Their standards are lower than that of the brutes. The cry of mothers weeping over the shame of their daughters makes no appeal to them. Their hearts are of stone and their consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.

The most sacred treasure we have to guard is the sanctity of the home. It is the tap root of our national institutions. Religion, education, and the state find their life sources in the home. Destroy the sanctity of the home and education becomes demoralized, religion becomes hypocritical, and the state becomes bankrupt. Men have spilt their blood upon battlefields to protect the sanctity of their homes. And the price they paid was none too dear nor too great; for if we lose our homes, we have lost everything. When the time comes that red blooded men are too cowardly to stand out in the open in defence of the sanctity of the home, the judgments of the Almighty begin to fall upon that people.

Lifting up our eyes again on that mountain peak of faith, we look into the distance. Another portion of the valley nestled among the towering peaks is dotted with houses of worship. We behold great cathedrals, marvels of architecture and paragons of beauty. The buildings vary in their design and

architecture. Some are Gothic with tall and commanding spires; some are Romanesque with beautiful arches; and others are Greek with commanding columns. Still others are of very simple and plain design. Some have chimes and others have bells. Some have majestic organs and others have no instruments whatsoever. But all are houses of worship calling men to the secret place of the most High. The forms of worship are not the same in all of these churches, but all are worshipping the same God. Jesus Christ is the one head who makes for unity of all who dwell in Him, regardless of the many minor theological interpretations.

The Holy Sabbath has dawned and faces are turned toward the sanctuary. Cathedrals call with their chimes while other sanctuaries call with their bells. Still others of simple design, without spire or chime, call with a mystic message to altars of worship. The psalmist said: "In the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me."

The tabernacle of God is a haven of refuge for weary souls. David said: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." Who are they who journey to the house of God on the Sabbath morning? Some are sad and have burdens grievous to bear. They would take their burdens to the Lord and leave them there. Some are joyous and happy and go to seek more of the joy that is eternal. Some are young and buoyant with youth, thrilled with the Master's challenge to the youth of to-day. They travel to the house of God, saying: "Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

For what purpose do they gather Sabbath after Sabbath in His Holy Temple? The object of some may be to hear a great sermon. With others it may be the anticipation of wonderful music. And even some may come with ulterior and selfish motives. But they who come for these things fail to find the secret place of the Lord. The

call of God's house is the call of communion and fellowship with God. "The Lord is in His Holy Temple, let all the earth keep silence before Him." The church is not a place to find social prestige; it is a place to find God. It is not a place for the display of the latest fashions, but it is a place for robes of righteousness and humility. It is not a place for mere intellectual essays, and the airing of human philosophies, but it is a place for music that flows like torrents out of the soul, melting the hearts of men with sweet comfort and holy inspiration.

It was in such a secret place that Isaiah saw "The Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. And above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: and the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of

him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the king, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, here am I; send me."

The panorama which sweeps before the vision on the mountain top, brings to view another scene. This part of the valley is not dotted with buildings as the other places have been. There is only one that stands in the midst. It is the old Jewish temple with all her ancient splendor. The temple, however, is divested of her many priests and ritualistic ceremonies. There are

no money changers, and there cannot be heard the lowing of cattle and the bleating of sheep which are for the sacrifices. The veil that separates the holy place from the holy of holies is rent in twain. Entrance into the holy of holies is no longer confined to the High Priest who entered once each year to offer sacrifices for the sins of the people. The veil was rent when Jesus died upon the cross. He became the Great High Priest for our souls. It is now possible for every man to enter into the holy of holies and make prayer and supplication through Jesus Christ.

Quiet retreats are scattered throughout the valley where pilgrims tarry to pray. The God who seeth them in secret rewards them openly. One of the negro spirituals says: "It's me, it's me, O Lord, standin' in the need of prayer. It is not my elder. It is not my deacon. But it's me, O Lord, standin' in the need of prayer."

John Wesley's prayer room was the throne of his power. Think what

has come forth from that little prayer room—the great Methodist church girdling the globe with her twelve millions of members, her magnificent church buildings, her great colleges and universities, her hundreds of periodicals and scores of publishing houses, her great hospitals and thousands of other institutions for the uplift of the race, had their beginnings back in that little prayer room. John Wesley said: "The world is my parish," and when he prayed in that little room, it was with a world vision. The great spiritual movements of the world have been born in closets of prayer. Jesus set us the great example in resorting to the place of prayer. Before he chose his disciples, he prayed all night. It was his custom to arise a great while before day and go alone in prayer. The victory of the cross was first won in the garden of Gethsemane.

Saul was stricken on the way to Damascus. He was led into the city blind and helpless. When God commanded Ananias to go and speak to

Saul, he said of him, "Behold, he prayeth." These words indicate the attention which God gives to prayer. "Behold, he prayeth." The great God who runs this universe must pause and give attention when a man really prays.

We lift up our eyes again from the mountain peak of faith to view in the distance another part of the valley nestled among the hills. A beautiful stream comes out of one of the canyons, winding its way down the valley. The spreading boughs of large virgin trees furnish refreshing shade along the bank of the stream. The fertile soil of the valley has produced a solid carpet of green. The song of the birds in the tops of the trees, mingled with the murmuring waters, are the only sounds that break the silence. Majestic mountains with uplifted crags stand on every side in awesome silence like the Sphinx holding the mysteries of the ages. This is another secret place of the Lord. It is the valley of meditation. The psalmist said: "He leadeth me beside the still waters."

Here is the dream land of the soul. Here imagination takes the wings of the morning and flies unto the uttermost parts of the earth. It sweeps the heavens and runs the gamut of the bygone ages. The millenniums of the past look down upon the soul through the dizzy crags of the mountains.

Away back in the book of Genesis we find these words concerning Isaac: "And Isaac went out to meditate in the field." Here Isaac found a secret place of the Lord, as the golden sunset spanned the western sky, and the lengthening shadows of the evening crept over the earth.

They who go to the place of meditation may with profit take with them a book. To the making of books there is no end. Some are good, some are indifferent, and some are bad. Only a good book will be the proper companion beside the still waters. But there is an old, old book which is the best of them all. Good books have come and gone, and their authors have died and have long since been forgotten. But the old

book that I speak of is the book of the ages. The corrosions of time have been unable to efface its pages. The grim monster of death has not been able to vanquish its author. The enemies of the book have only multiplied it with their opposition. Dying soldiers upon the battlefield have stained its promises with their blood. The sick and despondent have pondered its pages and have found strength in the midst of weakness. The strong have tarried with this old book and have found still more strength. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night."

There is yet another portion of the valley that we must view from the mountain of faith. It is one in the distance beyond these places we have been surveying. This part of the valley is traversed by a deep chasm over which broods a dark shadow. Neither its

depth nor its width can be penetrated by the natural eye. This chasm traverses the pathway of mortal man. None can escape descending at last into its depths. It holds in profound mystery all who follow the trail down into the shadow.

Another secret place of the Lord is at the grave in the presence of death. Profound emotions move us here, hitherto unknown to the soul. The waters are deeper than we can fathom. In our helplessness we cry unto the Lord. The psalmist said: "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication."

We shall come to this secret place as we say farewell to our loved ones. But at last we ourselves shall come to descend into the valley. When the time comes, we may feel our feet slipping and be conscious that the time is at hand. None can know the blessedness of the sweet fellowship with God in this hour, but those who have descended the valley in triumph. What

worth will be houses and lands and stocks and bonds in such an hour? The soul must leave everything behind. Not even this mortal body can accompany the soul down the shadowy trail. All earthly friends must say good-by as the descent begins. They feign would help us down but they cannot. Their arms are too short. Their strength is too frail. Oh, to know the secret of the Lord in such an hour! It was such an hour that David had in mind when he said: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Please take note of this word "abide". In the secret places of the most high are found the things that abide. The home may become only a temporary parking place for the change of raiment and the eating of food. Fast living and fast lives crowd out the sanctity of the home.

The home instead of becoming a secret place of the Lord may become only a way station on the road to hell. Men may join the church for mere sentiment, or purely worldly motives and never know anything about the church as a secret place of the Lord. To them the church is little more than a club or a lodge. The great spiritual secrets of the church are hid to them. Men may chant well written prayers and yet know nothing of real praying. They know nothing of the genuine fellowship of prayer. They have failed to find in the place of prayer the secret place of the most High. In meditation they may dream of only earthly castles and never vision the city of God. The still waters to them is only a place for quenching the physical thirst. They fail to find the secret place of the Most High. Death itself may be brushed aside with a jest and given but little thought. Funeral directors tell me that it is becoming increasingly difficult to secure pall bearers for funerals. We are so very busy that we cannot find

time to bury the dead. An undertaker told me that it was surprising how many people to-day refused to view the remains of their loved ones. There seems to be an increasing disregard for death, and a tendency on the part of many to brush it aside with a jest. They who treat the most solemn experiences of life in such a manner know nothing of the secret places of the Lord in such an hour.

We will all take one more look from the mountain of faith. Over beyond the great chasm with its brooding shadows may be seen streams of light like flashes from the aurora borealis, reaching into the mid heavens. The flare of the distant light is from the eternal city where the Lord God reigneth and is the light thereof. The sun goeth not down and they who dwell there abide forever. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

CHAPTER V

GLAD TIDINGS

Text: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth!" Isa. 52:7.

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Isa. 61:1.

In ancient times it was a custom to herald messages of great importance by fleet footed runners. One of the greatest of these runners was Phidippides. The great Persian army under Darius was hammering at the gates of

Athens. Phidippides was dispatched to Sparta for aid. In just thirty-six hours he was in Sparta which was one hundred and fifty miles from Athens. Another herald who immortalized himself was Paul Revere in his famous "midnight" ride when he gave alarm to the sons of liberty of the advancing British troops on Lexington.

These heralds of old sometimes brought evil tidings and sometimes good tidings. David was waiting in breathless suspense news from the battle field where his own son Absalom was in rebellion against the king's army. A runner is seen in the distance coming over the hills. It is Ahimaaz, and David consoles himself by saying that it is good news. From this bit of history it seems that in those days there were certain messengers set aside to bear good news, and others to bear evil news from the battlefield. The manner of the news was known as soon as the messenger was recognized in the distance. As Ahimaaz came near the king, he called and said: "All is well." "And

he fell down to the earth upon his face before the king, and said, Blessed be the Lord thy God, which hath delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my Lord the king." But following fast upon the trail of Ahimaaz comes another messenger. This messenger is Cushi, a bearer of evil tidings. When Cushi came the king said unto him, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" And Cushi answered, "The enemies of my Lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is." This arrow of evil tidings pierced the king's heart. Absalom was the apple of the king's eye. "And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, he cried, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son."

The messenger in the text is represented as coming over the mountains. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings." At the time these words were

written the prophet had in mind the Babylonian captivity. Judah had been devastated and the flower of her citizenry carried to the far away land of Babylon, where they were settled for the most part by the river Chebar. It was here that Ezekiel prophesied and sought to comfort the people. In this land of captivity marvelous things came to pass. We have the story of the Hebrew children and the fiery furnace, and also the life of Daniel filled with wonderful and miraculous events. But all of the prophets saw a remnant that would remain out of the captivity. A day of deliverance would come. Things could not always remain as they were. They saw the star of hope in the rent of the clouds. Inspired by the message of the prophets every Jew fondly dreamed of the great day of deliverance.

Jerusalem, the Holy City, had been devastated. The temple had been laid in ruins and the holy vessels carried away to be desecrated in pagan feasts. The glory of the days of David and

Solomon had gone into shameful eclipse. No longer could the city boast of a visitor like the Queen of Sheba from the far east, declaring as she beheld the glory of the city, "The half has not been told." Alas, she has been brought into dust and ashes. The flower of her citizenry has been carried into captivity, and only a straggling band remain behind to keep the home fires burning amid sad desolation.

They who live amid the desolation of what was the former glory of the nation pine in their hearts for the restoration of that glory. By day and by night they dream of their kinsmen in the far away land of captivity, and long for the day of their return. It is with eager expectation that watchmen await upon the remains of the depleted walls of the city, with eager eyes turned toward Babylon, anxiously awaiting the sight of some messenger coming over the hills with news from the captives. They are expecting to see a messenger one day round the tops of the hills with a quickened pace. He will

be fleet of foot and will move with more speed than any that have heretofore come from the land of captivity. Good news will be written upon his countenance and his message will be awaited with eager anticipation. He is the advance runner bearing the glad tidings that the captives have been set free, and are returning to rebuild the splendor and glory of the Holy City. There is no small stir among the struggling band of inhabitants who have waited through the long years for this glorious message. The good news was sufficient for a special day of thanksgiving and praise and the offering of sacrifices.

When Jesus came preaching, he applied the words of Isaiah to himself. In the gospel of Luke we find these words: "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where

it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book and gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

Jesus Christ is the messenger bearing the glad tidings unto the sons of men. He comes bearing sweet perfumes upon his garments. His robes of righteousness are whiter than the snow, and his staff is a staff of peace. His countenance is brighter than the morning star and His eyes are softer than the azure sky. He is the lily of the valley, and the fairest of ten thousand. None of the angels compare with him in splendor. He is the ancient of

days. His voice, although like the sound of many waters, is more musical than the song of the morning birds. The fresh dews of heaven are upon his brow, and his garments are fringed with the colors of the rainbow.

He comes with the Spirit of God upon Him. At His baptism, "The heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting on Him: and lo a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Christ did not go forth to the three and one half years of his earthly ministry without the Holy Spirit. He repeatedly instructed His disciples as to the importance and necessity of seeking and obtaining the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives fervency and power to the messenger of good tidings. He also stamps the tidings delivered upon the hearts of those who hear. Without the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the messenger becomes mechanical and the hearers become indifferent. The anoint-

ing of the Holy Spirit purifies and endues the messenger and awakens the hearers.

Jesus says, "The Lord hath anointed me." In the ancient economy we had the prophet, priest and king. These were all initiated into their offices by anointing. In Jesus Christ we have the fulfillment of all of these offices. As a preacher of righteousness, He is prophet. As a mediator for sin, He is priest. As the divine sovereign and ruler of the universe, He is the King of Glory. David with a prophetic eye sets forth the messianic hope in these words: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates: and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors: and the king of glory shall come in. Who is this king of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the king of glory shall come in. Who is this king of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the king of glory."

He who is prophet, priest and king

comes bearing good tidings. What are the tidings which he bears? May we not expect the tidings to be in keeping with the majesty and glory of the messenger? It is the Lord of glory who from heaven to earth comes down. He comes bearing the tidings of peace, salvation, the sovereignty of God, the day of vengeance, and comfort.

The peace of the world was broken by sin in the garden of Eden. A shrieking wail of despair ran the gamut of the earth's whole domain. Death ensued the fall, leaving its blight upon every created thing. Olin Alfred Curtis in his book, "The Christian Faith," says, "Sin, I believe, has spoiled the whole universe. Everything from the flowers to the planets is a failure—does not work out the full ideal. Nature is like a limping king. He gets along, but his movement is out of keeping with his majesty. Let the scientists investigate and induce his conclusions. I will in my thinkng and feeling make no terms with death. I hate death; I hate it everywhere—in the

garden, and meadow, and swamp, and forest—everywhere; it violates every noble thing in me; I long for a world where there will be no dead thing, where every created thing will just live, live, live forever!" A harmonious world was broken into inharmony by death. Both physical and spiritual death has brought discord. The enemy of man made the earth a domain of death. The devil had declared that another province had been added to hell's domain.

Into this world of strife, disappointment, and discord, the Son of God comes, bearing the glad tidings of peace. The angels who heralded the message of the Christ child to the shepherds on the Judean plains sang out loud and clear: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." He came to bring peace to the troubled hearts of men. Unto Him men may look and live and find rest for their weary souls. His message is one of peace and good will among the nations of the world. He would

teach men to know war no more and beat their swords into ploughshares. He would bring peace among the warring classes of society and industry, and establish business on the basis of the "Golden Rule" instead of selfish greed. Then shall come to pass the saying of the prophet. "And he shall judge among the nations and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

This messenger with glad tidings, "publisheth salvation." The cheers of satan's cohorts at the announcement of another addition to the province of hell had scarcely died away, when a way was made for sin and uncleanness. The compassionate love of God for a lost race intercepted satan's plan to add the whole of earth to hell's domain. "For God so loved the world, that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." What sweeter

message can be heard than that of salvation for the lost? Bring to the sick man who is dying a message of salvation for his physical recovery, and behold how eagerly he grasps the message. It may be some new remedy that has cured others. It may have been that the cure was of some case worse than himself. Despair is turned into hope as he reaches out for the new remedy. He tells his friends about the remedy as they come to visit him. He recommends it to others in a like condition. He announces that he is going to get well and makes his plans for the future. His home has been transformed. His loved ones are happy. The house that was a house of gloom has become one of rejoicing. But alas, the disappointment is turned again to weeping. The improvement proves to be only temporary. The malady not only resumes its old form but is intensified. It is apparent to all that the disease is incurable. There is no remedy. Friends and doctors are helpless

to check the ravages of the disease. Death is inevitable.

The moral malady of man is worse than any physical disease that has ever infected his body. This malady infects his soul which lives forever while his body returns "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." Man finds himself helpless in the hands of this dread malady. His own remedies only intensify the disease. Disappointed at his own efforts he cries out, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" It is just here that there cometh upon the mountains the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings. His feet are pierced and bleeding. There are nail prints in His hands, a scar in His side, and thorn pricks on His head. As he cometh He saith: "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death."

Jesus comes as the great physician for the poor sin sick soul. He says: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they

shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." No case is beyond his reach. All power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth. None who have trusted Him have ever been disappointed.

"We have heard the joyful sound:
Jesus saves! Jesus saves!
Spread the tidings all around: Jesus
saves! Jesus saves!
Bear the news to every land, Climb the
steeps and cross the waves;
Onward!—'tis our Lord's command;
Jesus saves! Jesus saves!"

This messenger who comes on the mountains not only "publishes salvation," but saith: "Thy God Reigneth." This universe has not been left to chance. There is a good God who is back of all the physical forces that we see, and it is He who reigneth. His trusting children look unto Him in confidence, saying: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." God is never asleep at the switch. His eye scans the universe.

He beholdeth the sparrow that falleth, and numbereth the hairs of our heads. Not a lily of the field unfolds its beautiful blossom without the touch of His hand.

Our God reigneth and is working out His divine purpose. Let no man deceive himself by thinking that God is afar off. The clock of His good providence has never failed to be on time. The hand of his judgments has never fallen amiss. Why is it that whole nations have been born in a day, and whole continents have been saved in the issue of a single battle where opposing forces were overwhelmingly in the majority? Why is it that great empires have crumbled over night, and the tides of history turned into channels of which man never dreamed? The materialistic philosophies of men will continue to give their answer in high sounding names. But to the child of simple faith in God all of these things mean, "Thy God reigneth."

What may seem strange to some, the vengeance of God is included among

the glad tidings. The messenger who comes over the mountains is "To proclaim . . . the day of vengeance of our God." He warns of impending judgments, and pleads with men to flee from the wrath to come. There are times when a message of alarm, if heeded, will prove good news for those in imminent danger. When the great St. Francis dam showed a seepage, it was a sign of danger. Engineers failed to estimate the great danger, and no alarm was given to the inhabitants in the valley below. Hundreds of inhabitants went peacefully to their beds one night with this awful danger impending. While they slept the great dam broke, and a solid wall of water seventy-five feet in height rolled with deafening sound down the valley, engulfing the sleepers in watery graves. Could some Paul Revere have ridden through the valley on that ill-fated night, and given the alarm for the people to flee for their lives, his message of alarm would have been good news. Hundreds of lives would have been sav-

ed which were caught in the terrible torrents. He who sounds the alarm to a man in a burning building is his friend. He who would say to him, "All is well," when that building was on fire would be his enemy.

That doctor is your friend who warns of impending physical dangers, and at the same time shows you the way of escape from danger. Jesus Christ comes as the friend of man as he warns him of the dangers of sin and shows him a way of escape. The angels who warned Lot of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah were friends to the man. It was only in heeding their message that his life was saved.

The wreckage of human souls is not only a fact of the future, but it is a fact of history. Hell is not a mere theory of misguided religious dreamers concerning the after life, but the beginnings of hell are facts in this life. Multitudes of people have already reached the suburbs of hell because of their own misdoings. That they are in such a state is a fact that cannot be

denied, to which even they give testimony. Jesus Christ lifts the danger signal in the pathway of erring men, warning them, "Death is ahead." He shows to them the way of life.

This messenger who comes with beautiful feet upon the mountains, brings the glad tidings of comfort. It is His mission "to comfort all that mourn." His voice can calm the troubled waters. He soothes the aching heart. He is the friend that sticketh closer than a brother, and is present in every hour of need. He said: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God believe also in me." When Jesus left the world, he said: "I will not leave you comfortless." "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever."

"O spread the tidings 'round, wherever man is found,
Wherever human hearts and human woes abound;
Let every Christian tongue proclaim

the joyful sound:
The comforter has come!"

In the year 490 B. C. Darius, king of the Persians, mustered an army of 120,000 men with which he laid siege to Athens and other Greek cities. Darius transported his army across the Aegean Sea with six hundred ships. One province after another fell in his pathway as he proceeded toward Athens. Preparatory for the attack on Athens, Darius landed his great army at Marathon, barely one day's journey from Athens. The Athenians were nerved by the magnitude of the danger to almost superhuman strength. Slaves were induced to enter the army on the promise of liberty. Every available man was mustered for the great crisis. Miltiades was in command of the Athenian army. He led an army of only ten thousand men out to meet the Persian army of one hundred and twenty thousand. They met upon the plains of Marathon. The destiny not only of Greece but of the whole continent of Europe swung

in the balances that day. Without waiting for an attack from the Persians, the trusty Greek soldiers charged, and swept like an invincible tempest into the great Persian army. The Persians swayed and began to give way like a great forest in a tornado's path. With terrible slaughter the Persians were driven to their ships. Miltiades dispatched a courier to Athens, which was twenty miles away, to bear the news of the victory. Within only a few hours the fleet-footed runner reached the city, but in so breathless a state, that as the multitudes surrounded him to hear his message, he could only gasp, "Victory is ours," and fell dead.

Jesus Christ comes up over the hills from the battlefield of death, hell, and the grave. He has led captivity captive, and proclaims, "Victory is ours." He comes not prostrate and dying like the Athenian runner, but alive forevermore. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings."

CHAPTER VI

CONSECRATION

Text: I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

So we, being many, are one body

in Christ, and every one members one of another.

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given unto us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;

Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another;

Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not.

Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that do weep.

Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. Romans 12.

Consecration is the key to success in any field of endeavor. Why do some men succeed and others fail? Why do

we constantly find men of less ability forging ahead of men of more ability? The secret is consecration. Consecrated ignorance sometimes surpasses unconsecrated intellect.

The great men of the world have paid the gate receipts in their consecration to some task. Thomas A. Edison labors from twelve to sixteen hours a day although he has passed the eighty mark. Edison is a genius, but his genius would not have blessed the world had it not been consecrated to a great task. Houdini who recently died was recognized as the master magician of all times. No lock was ever found that he could not master. He freed himself as readily from the greatest prisons of the world as you would open the front door in the morning, and step out for the morning paper. Houdini made no claim of mystery in connection with his marvelous works of magic. He said that it was scientific skill which came as the result of long and arduous practice. He was consecrated to a great task. Paderewski became

the master pianist of the world not alone because of genius, but because of his consecration to a great task. He practiced eight hours every day. The men that we call extraordinary were once ordinary. They went on, however, where ordinary men quit. They were consecrated to some great task. They labored while other men were sleeping. They arose before day while the ordinary man slept until the rising of the sun. Consecration in any field of endeavor cannot be neutralized. It will tell through the years. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

The twelfth chapter of Romans is the climax of the book, which is the profoundest glimpse any man has ever taken into the philosophy and meaning of life, and the destiny of man. The "therefore" of the first verse refers back to what has preceded. Paul has just uttered an exclamation in the preceding chapter in which he says: "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his

ways past finding out." The "therefore" refers to the unspeakable riches of God. Such a God is worthy of our consecration. There is nothing that we have and are that is worthy of withholding from Him. Such a God is a challenge for every ounce of our endeavor. His cause is worth fighting for. If we fall with our faces in the front line trenches of His service, we have not fallen amiss.

It is well for us to bear in mind that consecration and surrender are two different things. In surrender we give up our sins and all our evil habits, and God pardons us. In consecration we commit absolutely into God's hands all of the good things that we have. This includes our talents, our time, all that we have, all that we are, and all that we ever expect to be.

Men in the secular world put us to shame in their consecration to secular tasks, as compared with our consecration to God. The cause of Christ languishes because of unconsecrated Christians. The men who have been

consecrated entirely to Christ have stirred the world in every age in which they lived. No age has been so dark, or so hard, as to be unyielding to men and women who have placed everything on the altar for Christ. The world has been quick to detect such characters. A wicked world knows the earmarks of consecration.

God exhorts his children to a complete consecration. As a complete surrender culminates in pardon, so a complete consecration culminates in sanctification. God has called His people to be a holy people. He expects them to be separated and distinct from the world. The bane of the church to-day is lack of consecration among its members. Their hearts are divided. Christ does not have the whole heart. Ephraim has his idols. In this connection Sam Jones gives the following illustration: "Suppose you were to buy an elegant residence, pay the money and get the deeds, and the day you were to go in, the gentleman said: 'Here's the key to eight rooms. I have reserved two

rooms.' 'Didn't I buy the house?' 'Yes.' 'Well, what do you mean?' 'I want to keep four tigers in one room, and the other I want to fill with reptiles. I want them to stay here.' You say: 'Well, my friend, if you mean what you say, I would not have your house as a gracious gift. You want me to move my family into a house where one room is full of tigers and the other full of snakes.' Many a time we turn over our whole hearts to God, and when He comes in, we have reserved some rooms for the wild beasts of pride and the hissing serpents of iniquity. Let me tell you, brethren, I won't ask God to come and live in a house that I won't let my family live in. Empty every room in the house, and then the heart is the center of gravity to Jesus Christ, and He will come in and live with you."

Consecration involves a duty to God, a duty to ourselves, and a duty to our fellowmen. The twelfth chapter of Romans elaborates upon these du-

ties, and the things involved in their fulfillment.

The first verse reads: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Here we have a metaphor which is taken from the old Jewish sacrifice. The consecration is urged on the grounds of the mercies of God. O the depth of the riches of His mercy! Mercy stood at the eastern gate of the city four square, and looked with compassion upon a lost and fallen world. Mercy stood in the councils of God, and offered redemption through the sacrifice of God's only begotten Son. Mercy, mercy, yea, the mercy of God hung on a cruel Roman cross. Mercy was there beneath the clouds when the black storms were raging over Calvary's brow. In mercy the Son cried, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Can anyone reject this mercy and turn it away. The story is related that Mendelssohn came to see the great

Frieburg organ. Not knowing who he was, the custodian at first refused to let him put his fingers on it. He at last consented rather reluctantly for Mendelssohn to play on the organ. The guardian was both amazed and spellbound as he heard the wonderful music pour forth at the touch of the master hand. At last he mustered courage to approach the organist and ask him his name. When he was told, he stood almost dumb with humiliation, and exclaimed in deep abasement: "And I refused you permission to play upon my organ." How often we treat Christ in the same way! He is the great master musician of the soul. We sometimes falter at his demands. We raise the question: "Does it pay?" If you doubt it, just try it. Go also and ask someone who has tried it. When we consecrate everything to God, we stand in wonder that we did not make the consecration sooner. The glory far outweighs the cross. The great peace is sweeter than the dregs of the cup. The sunshine is brighter than the agony

and darkness of Gethsemane. The resurrection is more blessed than the crucifixion.

Our consecration "is acceptable unto God." He is waiting and ready to receive it. He has been waiting all of these years for some of you. But still you have delayed. The same procrastination which keeps the sinner in his sins, will keep the Christian out of the land of promise. God called the Israelites in the wilderness to enter the land of Canaan. It was a pleasing and acceptable thing to God for His people to cross over the Jordan and possess the land.

God still calls his people to go over and possess the land. He calls us to cross the Jordan of consecration. He calls us to subdue the walled cities and the enemies of the land. But alas, how many are held back by the report that giants are in the land. Caleb and Joshua had confidence that the land could be possessed. They said: "Let us go over and possess the land." Their God was bigger than the giants and the

walled cities. They turned a deaf ear to the evil report of the ten spies who said: "We are as grasshoppers in the sight of the giants and the land cannot be possessed." The multitudes of the Israelites listened to the spies with the evil report. They took the course that seemed of least resistance. They turned back into the wilderness to perish because of their unbelief. Caleb and Joshua, however, were permitted at last to enter the land. Their faith was acceptable and pleasing to God.

Our bodies as a living sacrifice means all. Some years ago a Christian celebration was held on the west coast of Africa. At this celebration the converted natives brought their meager possessions to show their devotion and loyalty to Christ. One young woman brought eighty-five cents. This was an unusually large sum for a poor native to bring. The missionary was suspicious lest the money had been obtained by false means, and questioned the girl as to how she obtained it. The convert told him that she had sold her-

self as a slave to a neighboring planter for the amount of the offering. The money represented her services as a slave for the remainder of her life. She had brought it all and placed it at the foot of the cross. Such devotion on the part of this poor African is enough to put us to shame. Let us present our bodies as a living sacrifice. Jesus is worthy of all that we have to give. Our most precious treasure is in safe keeping in His hands. "He will not leave thee nor forsake thee."

This consecration to which God calls us is not an unreasonable thing. Paul says that it is our reasonable service. Jesus demands no price of us which He did not pay Himself. In that great prayer which He prayed at the last supper, he said: "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they may also be sanctified." Jesus went all the way to the cross. He drank the bitter dregs of the cup. He was crucified on the cross that we might be crucified with Him. Paul says: "I am crucified with Christ." Paul lived the crucified life.

This is the life that the great saints of the ages lived. We may ask ourselves the question, "Does such a life pay?" If you could rend the mystic veil and could hear the testimony of Savonarola, John Huss, John Wesley, and Dwight L. Moody, what do you think their testimony would be? Do you have any doubt but that they would tell you it pays? I think you would hear them saying something like this: "If we could come back to earth, and had ten thousand lives to invest, we would place them on the altar for Christ."

Christ has a reasonable claim upon our lives. He has bought us with a price. "He gave himself for the church that He might sanctify it and present unto himself a glorious church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing." A mother's sacrifice, love, and devotion gives that mother a claim upon the life of her child. She has sacred rights in the life of her child that no one else has. And it is only reasonable on the part of the child to recognize the

claims of the mother. It is thus that Jesus Christ has a right to claim the full devotion of our lives. His love for us reaches beyond a mother's love and devotion. Our consecration, then becomes no unreasonable thing. It is our reasonable service. Anything short of our entire consecration is unreasonable.

Our duty to God is further set forth in the words: "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer."

The business of God is not to be done slothfully. We should go at it with a zeal and energy equal to any that we find in the secular world. Behold what zeal men exercise in the making of money! They risk their health and even their lives, for that which they must leave behind when they leave this world. Behold the zeal of the scholar! He toils and labors incessantly through long years. He often robs his body of the sleep and rest it needs for the sake of knowledge. It

is no uncommon thing to find him at midnight poring over his books, or else find him arising a great while before day. Even much zeal is found in the superficial things of life. The devotees of a gay and worldly society often sacrifice their health, and even their lives to answer the demands of a vain and foolish world. Shall we have less zeal for our Lord than the world has for its temporal interests?

A Christianity that is dead in earnest has always commanded the attention of the world. The world has little patience with a compromising religion. If the church is to win a cold and indifferent world, she must have warmth and fervency of spirit. The Greeks were noted for their games. They had one game in which speed and endurance were not the only tests. Each runner was given a lighted torch, and the wreath was given to the man who came in first with "his torch alight." We face a danger in the church by measuring success in merely "getting there." If with all of our improved

methods and programs of work, we lose the torch of spiritual fervor, we have failed.

The consecrated life takes into account our duty to ourselves. Our first duty is a sober opinion of ourselves. "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith." Some one has said: "It is good to be wise, but it is bad to think ourselves so; for there is more hope of a fool than of him that is wise in his own eyes." Many a man has failed in life because he maintained an exaggerated opinion of himself. Such a man is easily detected. His acquaintances recognize it and point to it as one of his failures. God expects us to maintain a well balanced estimate of our abilities and capacities. "Let no man think of himself more highly than he ought to think."

Another duty is to avoid hypocrisy. "Let love be without hypocrisy,"

is the reading of the American Standard version. We have a solemn duty to be ourselves. God made us thus. He gave us the personality that we have. He made us different from every other person in all the world. By being ourselves, we can do a work that no other person can do. Hypocrisy is a robber. He will rob me of the highest possible attainment in my life.

Still another duty is to be loyal to the talents which God has given us. "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we being many, are one body in Christ, and everyone members one of another." The hand should not quarrel because it is not the eye. The foot should not complain because it is not the ear. The little finger should not quarrel because it does not receive as much nourishment as the leg. Every member of the body has its place and function. The hand should not try to become the eye, but should try to become a better hand. The foot should not try to become the ear, but should

seek to become a better foot.

Consecration involves our duty to others. "Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality." Hospitality is one of the chief Christian graces. This exhortation was made in the days when the life of the church was largely dependent upon the hospitality exercised on the part of the membership. Hotels were few in those days. Christian ministers who traveled through the country were dependent upon the hospitality of the church. Others who fled from persecutions were dependent for their saftey on the hospitality of the church. Hospitality promotes good fellowship among the saints. It gains the confidence of sinners and gives an approach for the salvation of the world.

We should exercise appreciation and sympathy in our association with others. "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep." Some people are sadly lacking in an appreciation for the happy and joyous side of life. They see only the solemn

and serious. I have preached to some people who acted as though they might commit the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost if they laughed at anything humorous. Some people who act like they are sick need a good laugh more than they need medicine. A little humor of the proper variety sometimes saves a very dry sermon. On the other hand we should be able to weep with those that weep. We should feel deeply with those who are in sorrow and distress. Our hearts should be so big and full of love that others will be drawn to us like bees are drawn to the flowers.

"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men," is still another exhortation. Every effort should be put forth to live peaceably with all men. We should be ever ready to go the second mile for the sake of peace. The apostle recognizes, however, that it will not be possible to live peaceably with some people, for he says: "If it be possible, live peaceably with all men." There are some people

who will not have peace. They have yielded to an unruly temper, and an ungovernable tongue so long, that it has become part of their nature to be disturbers of the peace of others. Poise and balance have gone out of their lives, and they have become the slaves of evil tempers. It will be better to flee the presence of such persons than to become embroiled with them.

The final exhortation is, "Avenge not yourselves." Vengeance belongeth to God and not to man. "Vengeance is mine: I will repay, saith the Lord." We can turn all of our abuses and persecutions over to God. If we try to even things up by retaliation, we will make bad matters worse. It was said of Archbishop Cramer that the way for a man to make him his friend was to do him an ill turn. Upon such a man he bestowed special acts of kindness. Good is the most powerful weapon against evil. It is more powerful than the railing tongue and vindictive anathema. "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

CHAPTER VII

THE FREEDOM OF CHRIST

Text: *"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."* John 8:36.

The history of the world is a long story of a struggle for liberty. Bondage has been the curse of the race, and liberty has been the struggling cry of souls through the ages. The caged wild beast will walk a thousand circles a day behind iron bars. In every movement there is a pitiful plea for liberation. His wild instincts cry for the freedom of the mountains and the haunts of the jungles. The futile struggles of humanity for freedom have been more pathetic than the movements of the caged beast. Independent of Christ man moves in an endless circle. He follows the ever receding pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. He

turns aside from every mirage to be deceived again and again.

The philosophy of the present day which would save the world without allegiance to Jesus Christ is only an old philosophy in a different form. It is only another portion of the path in a well beaten circle. The cessation of the soul at death may be traced to the Epicureans. The brotherhood of man without a personality to enforce it may be traced to the Stoics. The mystic pantheism found in the self styled advanced modern cults completes only a rim in the circle from the Hindu of India to America. A professor in a certain University recently announced to his class that God did not create man but that man created God. The statement was hailed by some as profound thinking. However shocking and startling such a teaching may appear to us, it is only a link in an old circle. Such a doctrine was taught by Xenophanes, the Greek philosopher and poet, six hundred years before Christ. Man still rushes in a restless pace over the

well beaten circles of intellectuality, idolatry, and sensuality in quest of freedom. But alas, his brow drips with the perspiration of despair as he madly rushes in quest of freedom in these things. We are pointed to the star of hope for an enslaved and troubled world in the words: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

Jesus sets free the intellect. This is just the very thing that Jesus has been accused of not doing. The charge has been repeatedly brought against Him that he enslaves, rather than sets free the intellects of man.

One of the saddest commentaries on human selfishness, prejudice and egotism, has been the attempt which we have seen in the past to curb the intellects of men in the name of the Christ. It has been less than three centuries since the death of Galileo, the noted Italian astronomer. He taught that the earth was round and discovered a number of scientific maxims of our day. But for this he was tried for her-

esy. He was brought before ten scarlet robed cardinals, compelled to drop upon his knees before them, and with a solemn oath recant many things which he knew to be true in order to save his head from the axman. In the past the prison dungeon, the burning stake, the blade of the axman, and every evil connivance of hell itself have been used in the name of Christ to bind the intellects of men.

All of this is so utterly contrary to Jesus Christ that we stand appalled at such audacious and fraudulent attempts in His name.

This enslavement of the intellect in the name of Christ has brought about a sad reaction in the world. It has come about that we have a stalwart intellectuality which fears to pay any distinctive homage to the Son of God. They say that they fear intellectual enslavement if they acknowledge Him as Lord. They want to be free.

But intellectuality may become enslaved to itself. It may be bound by the chains of its own making. It may

be imprisoned behind the bars bearing the stamp of its own trade mark. And this is just what has happened time and again in the world. The cry of the modern mind is that we do not want to be hampered by an intellectual tradition, any holy book or holy person. Now the Greeks came as near being free from these hamperings, so much feared by the modern mind, as any people in history. Professor James Harvey Robinson says, "The chief strength of the Greeks lay in their freedom from hampering intellectual tradition. They had no venerated classics, no holy books, no dead language to master, no authority to check their free speculation." Lord Bacon said that they had no antiquity of knowledge and no knowledge of antiquity.

But all of this ideal of intellectual freedom, which is so contended for by the modernist, was bound in slavery by a chain of its own making. They were bound by a sense of false pride and dignity. He made no practical apparatus by which his knowledge could be

channeled for the good of the race. It was an age of slavery and the philosopher held himself above the ordinary and menial tasks of life. It is reported that Archimedes, the great mathematician, disdained to make any record of his ingenious devices because they were beneath the noble profession of a philosopher. Therefore this intellectual bondage prevented them from having many practical devices which they might have had. They had no microscope or telescope, no mechanical time piece, no thermometer or barometer, to say nothing of cameras or spectroscopes.

It is to Jesus that we owe the breaking of this intellectual bondage. He dignified the common things of life. He was born in a manger, rode on a mule, and was buried in a simple tomb. He labored as a carpenter when a boy. He plucked grain in the fields. He washed His disciples' feet, and cooked food for them on the coals by the sea. He taught that he who is greatest is the servant of all. In our day this lib-

eration from the bondage of the old Greek intellectualist has been to the blessing of the world. And we may trace all of our modern day conveniences to this liberation. The skilled machinist toils in grease and grime. The scientist labors day and night in his laboratory with all manner of intricate and menial appliances. The teacher of agriculture goes into the fields with his overalls like a farmer.

It is reported that John Jay, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, went into a butcher shop one day to trade. While there, another customer bought a chicken and wanted the butcher to deliver it. The butcher informed the man that he did not deliver goods, that it was a cash and carry store. The customer then inquired if he could not get someone to carry the fowl to his home, stating that he would be going right along and could show the way. Chief Justice Jay spoke up and said: "I will carry the chicken for you." So the customer accepted the offer, walking empty handed to his

home with the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States carrying the chicken. Upon approaching near his home, the man chanced to ask his servant his name. Whereupon he received the reply: "My name is John Jay. I am the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States."

About one hundred years ago a certain philosophy came into prominence called positivism. It excludes as of no value all knowledge except that gained by actual experiment and observation of natural phenomena. It has had much to do with crystallizing the gross materialism of the age in which we live. Diderot, one of the chief exponents of this philosophy says: "Everything is experimental in man." But the positivists confine their experiments only to material things. However, there is another side of life for man, other than that expressed in flesh and bone. Man has a moral sense. He is an eternal soul.

On one occasion two of John's disciples came to Jesus. "Then Jesus turn-

ed, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto Him: Rabbi, where dwellest thou? He saith unto them, Come and see." These disciples of John answered the challenge of Jesus. They went and they saw. One of these two disciples was Andrew, and he was so enthusiastic in his new found discovery that he hastened to carry the news to his brother, Simon. When he found his brother, he said: "We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ." Christ gives the same challenge to the world to-day. "Come and see."

But there is a tragic intellectual bondage which keeps men from coming to see. One of the most heart rending things that I see in this world to-day is men in intellectual bondage. In many respects their plight is worse than the inhabitants' of the red light districts of our cities. The chains that bind such minds are harder to break, the locks are harder to open. I love the charm, the magnetism, and the winsome per-

sonality of these splendid minds. They have answered every call in life to come and see but this one. The laboratory called them, and they went, and there imbibed the knowledge of the ages. The observatory called them, and they went, and there discovered the wonders of the heavens above. Jesus Christ has called them, but here they have refused to adopt a principle which they have contended for in every field of knowledge, "Come and see." Oh tragedy of tragedies, to see intellectual men, great men, in the eyes of the world good men, going to their graves in intellectual bondage, claiming to be paragons of intellectual freedom. If they would only spend one hour with Jesus, it would mean with many that they would know Him. If they would only spend one-hundredth part of the time at the feet of Jesus which they spend in the laboratory or library they would come to know Him.

Jesus liberates the self expression of men. Self expression is one of the first laws of life. The mother realizes

this before her baby is many weeks old. This self expression is sometimes embarrassing to her when he grows a little older.

On one occasion the disciples came to Jesus with what they considered a very urgent message. They said: "We saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbid him, because he followeth not us." Mark 9:38. "But Jesus said, forbid him not." The disciples wanted to suppress this man because he was not following their program, and doing things just as they were doing them. Jesus further says: "He that is not against me is for me." This example here should teach us that Jesus takes little part in denominational wranglings and heated discussions on things not fundamentally essential.

Jesus allowed men to express themselves though they be in the wrong. By this he did not endorse their wrong. But He was a perfect gentleman, and his method was rather to draw than to force men.

The attitude of Jesus at His trial caused Pilate to marvel. He allowed every man to have his say when he could have brought legions of angels to suppress them.

The doctrine of free speech and free press is distinctive of Christ. They are among humanity's great blessings. They are the rivers over which the ships of human progress have sailed.

Jesus has liberated human slavery. He never specifically condemned human slavery while He was on earth. One of the epistles of Paul is written to Philemon in behalf of Onesimus, a run away slave. Philemon is urged to forgive his former slave and receive him back. Paul says to Philemon: "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account." Jesus nor the apostles never condemned the institution of slavery. But Jesus did something that was far greater. He planted a leaven in the world which he knew would eventually banish the institution. To-day we work ourselves

into a frenzy over the specific evils, but Jesus concerned himself with the more fundamental principles that would overcome evil.

Jesus has liberated womanhood. Before Christ came, woman was looked upon as inferior to man. To-day in the lands where Christ has not been preached, she occupies the position of a slave. The girl baby is unwelcome in the home. In India the girl baby is often pitched to the crocodiles in the Ganges. In heathen lands women are sold and bartered like cattle. In Christian lands woman has been exalted to the high and lofty position which she deserves. In the heart of Africa, the natives do not even have any word in their language for home, no word for love, and no word for virtue. Woman is not only on an equality with man in this country, but the opinion is sometimes expressed that the balance of power lies on the side of the woman.

Think of a land where there is no name for mother, and compare it with America where love and reverence for

motherhood abound. Men never get so big or great that mother does not play a large part in their lives. George Stewart was one of America's greatest preachers and platform men. In his introduction to a series of lectures at Emory University, he said: "I am in fullest sympathy with you in your scholastic work, having pursued the courses which you have pursued, and having had conferred on me the degrees of A. B. and M. A. and D. D. and L L. D. After all of this doctoring, I am glad to announce that I am still alive." After he had received all of these degrees and had become a great man, I heard him say that he was planning a trip to Europe and the Holy Land. All of his arrangements had been made, and the day was set to sail from New York. Before leaving, he went to pay a visit to his mother. He found that his mother was opposed to his going. She said: "Now George, you are not going to go to Europe. The ship might sink, and you might get drowned." And Dr. Stewart said that he didn't go.

Jesus has liberated us from the open saloon in America. Faithful Christian women were pioneers in this fight against the saloon. Their faith in a conquering Christ never let them waver in their heroic battle. Education was begun; agitation was launched; and prayer meetings were held until the pulpits of America flamed with the prohibition message. The churches united in this common cause and pressed the battle until the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution was adopted. The same forces which closed the door of the open saloon can eventually drive the bootlegger from the land. We are now hearing the slogan of a saloonless world. A saloonless world is no more of a Utopian dream than was a saloonless America fifty years ago. Our Christ is able to do it if we follow Him.

Jesus is seeking to liberate us from war. The curse of humanity is war and Sherman spoke no idle words when he said, "War is Hell." The heavenly choir sang over the Judean plains nine-

teen centuries ago, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." But there can be no peace among men until glory is given to God. No League of Nations, no Court of Nations, nor no disarmament of nations can bring peace unless men first give glory to God. No philosophy or human system can within itself bridle the passions of men. Unless the nations of the earth agree to follow Christ in good will toward each other, war will continue upon the earth growing more terrible with each successive conflict.

Jesus sets free the individual soul. In the seventh chapter of Romans we find a graphic description of a soul struggling in bondage. The struggle is so intense that the heart cry is, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The answer to that cry is: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." In 1871 in Cartersville, Georgia, Captain John Jones, a Christian lawyer, lay on his bed, dying. As he drew near

the end, he called his family to his bedside and gave his parting words to them one by one. He came to the oldest son, Sam. Sam had been very wicked and his dissipation had greatly grieved him. The dying father said: "My poor, wicked, wayward, reckless boy, you have broken the heart of your sweet wife and brought me down in sorrow to my grave. Promise me, my boy, to meet me in heaven." Under the deepest emotion the son said, "Father, I'll make the promise; I'll quit—I'll quit—I'll quit!"

At the time of his father's death, Sam Jones was a drayman in Cartersville, Georgia. He was bright, witty, and jocular, but was a patron of the saloons and pool rooms and among his companions was notorious for his recklessness and dissipation.

A few Sundays later he was converted and joined the church in a revival meeting which was being conducted by his old grandfather, Rev. Samuel G. Jones. His grandfather called on him to preach the following

Sunday. The invitation was accepted and a great crowd came to hear him. In later years Mr. Jones said: "I do not know what I said in that first sermon except 'God is good' and 'I am happy!'" Profound conviction rested upon the audience and many of his friends came to the altar and were converted. This was the beginning of one of the most remarkable ministerial careers that America has ever known. Sam Jones, the drunkard, gambler, and dissipator, had been liberated. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

CHAPTER VIII

A PRINCE IN ISRAEL

Text: "*And he said, thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.*" Gen. 32:29.

Twin Brothers

Jacob was the twin brother of Esau. The children were born in answer to prayer when their father was sixty years of age. The brothers were opposite in temperament and disposition. Esau, the first born, was hairy. Jacob was a child of smooth skin. One was quiet and reserved while the other was exceedingly active. Esau was what the psychologists would call a motor-minded child. The characteristic of this class of children is to be ever active, and care little or nothing

for reading or contemplation. Jacob was what would be called today a sensuous-minded child. He was of the restive, contemplative type, caring little or nothing for the activities of which his brother was so fond. Here is illustrated the fact that all children are not the same, and that the general laws of pedagogy and psycho-analysis which we work out in the schools will have to be adjusted to the individual child.

I knew a college professor who had specialized in education and child training. In a conversation on the street car one day, his wife said that all of the rules which they had learned in the text books worked fine on their first child, which was a girl. But she said when the boy came, he upset practically all of the rules they had ever learned and left them very much baffled. An important and far reaching discovery has been made in our modern system of education, which we are trying to conform to more and more, both in the church and the state. In former years we sought to adjust the child to

education. But today we have discovered that education must be adjusted to the needs of the child.

A Mess of Pottage

Esau was the elder of the twins, having been born first. He was therefore the heir to his father's blessing, and in time to become the sheik of the tribe at his father's death. However, his mother, Rebekah, had a vision from the Lord before the birth of the twins that the elder would one day serve the younger. This she interpreted to mean that Jacob should eventually obtain the blessing of the first born. Jacob was his mother's favorite child, and she had no doubt instilled into his mind the thought, that one day he was to supplant his brother. Esau, the Nimrod, was the favorite of his father. As the years went by, Jacob, in accordance with the teaching of his mother, was ever on the watch for an opportunity to obtain his brother's heritage.

One day Esau returned from the field exhausted and exceedingly hun-

gry from a long hunt. For a day and a night he may have followed the chase without food. On reaching home he finds that Jacob has just prepared a very tempting dish. It is a mess of pottage, one of the choice dishes of that land. It was a vegetable of a bright red color with a very tempting odor, especially to a hungry man. It was tempting to the olfactory nerves as well as to the taste. In the extremity of his hunger, Esau cried, "Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage, for I am faint." Jacob thought he saw a long looked for opportunity and sought to drive a hard bargain. Jacob said, "Sell me this day thy birthright." Esau reasoned, "Behold I am at the point to die, and what profit will this birthright be to me?" Jacob then made Esau swear a solemn oath to bind the bargain, and Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. Both brothers were culpable for this transaction. Jacob took advantage of his brother's fatigue and hunger, and drove a hard Jewish bargain. On the other hand,

Esau showed little appreciation for the greatest possible blessing in his life, and sold it for a mess of pottage.

The world is replete with illustrations of those who have committed the same folly of Esau. People the world around are doing the same thing every day. Young people sell the opportunity of an education for a mess of pottage. The senators and cabinet members in this country who bargained with the big oil interests, have no doubt in recent investigations, concluded that they sold out for only a mess of pottage. Men and women sell their virtue for a mess of pottage, not to be disillusioned until after the fatal bargain is made. Men bargain their souls for a mess of pottage to awaken at last to the awful realization, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul." Christians in the church will bargain their entire consecration to God for a mess of pottage.

A Father's Blessing Stolen

Isaac, the father, evidently did not regard the bargain made between the boys as binding. In his declining years he decided the time had come to bestow his blessing upon Esau, his elder son. As the father's plans became known, there was instituted one of the most nefarious plots ever perpetrated in any household. The guilty parties to the heinous plot were Rebekah, the mother, and Jacob, the son and brother. Esau had been sent by the father to the field to kill venison, and prepare for him the delicious savory meat of which he was fond, before he pronounced the promised blessing. Rebekah led her son into a grievous wrong for which she reaped heavily in the years to come. She prepared the savory meat from a kid, and disguised Jacob as Esau, and had him go in to his old blind father, and steal his brother's blessing by the boldest of deception and the most audacious lies possible. When Esau returned, he found that the bless-

ing which he had formerly valued so little was gone. The plot was uncovered which wrung Esau's heart and caused the old father to quake and tremble with grief.

Both Rebekah and Jacob are destined to reap in bitter tears for the deed they did this day. How far reaching can one day of sin be in a human life! It can bring years of grief and untold toil and pain. What did this day cost Rebekah? Murder was engendered in the heart of Esau for his brother. This he proposed to execute at the death of Isaac. Rebekah was facing a torn and disrupted home stained with fratricide. Isaac is old and may die any day, and then Jacob will be murdered. Rebekah and Jacob had run ahead of God. They did not have the faith to patiently await the fulfillment of the promise made to Rebekah that the younger brother would rule over the elder. They had put into practice the false doctrine that the end jusifies the means. Rebekah is now facing the sad probability of seeing the

act of deception which she had instituted in order to honor her favorite son, resulting in his murder instead of his exaltation. In the extremity of her plight, she devised a way of escape for Jacob. Under the guise of leaving home for a few days, Jacob is sent away to the land of Haran. Rebekah was never permitted to look upon the face of her favorite son again. The "few weeks" of his anticipated stay lengthened into many years. Long before Jacob was ever permitted to return to his home Rebekah died. Little did the mother dream that that day of deception was going to drive her beloved son away from her face never to see him again. But such were the wages for the mother, for that sin.

What did it mean to Jacob? It meant that he had to flee for his life to a strange land. It meant that he had to reap bitterly in later years of the same kind of seed that he had sown. Deception he sowed and deception he reaped. After laboring seven years for Rachel whom he loved, Leah

the sore-eyed and ugly elder sister was put off on him instead, and it cost him seven more years of hard labor for Rachel. Many long years were spent laboring as a hired servant in a strange land. His wages were changed ten times while he was in Haran with the view of driving a hard bargain against him. Then, in the later years of his life he reaped deception of the grossest sort, when his sons sold their brother Joseph to the Ishmaelites, and came back and presented his garment dipped in the blood of a kid, and told they had found it but knew not where Joseph was. The old man was greatly grieved believing his favorite son had been destroyed by wild beasts.

A Wonderful Night

On his way to Haran Jacob encountered his first religious awakening. He had been the hard bargain driver without any compunctions of conscience up to this time. On the long journey alone into Haran he had plenty of time for thought and reflection.

The hardships and the peril of the journey brought home to him his sin. Being away from his father's house on a long, perilous journey to a strange land was by no means a pleasant experience. At the close of a long day's journey Jacob came to Bethel. Here his grandfather Abraham had erected an altar and had worshiped in other days. The bleak and barren hills gave him a view of the surrounding country. There beside the altar erected by Abraham, he meditated in the evening time as had been his father Isaac's custom before him. The hand of an accusing conscience no doubt rested heavily upon him as the shades of night fell upon the earth. At length he fell asleep with a stone for his pillow. It proved to be a wonderful night; one never to be forgotten in all the future years of his life. In his dream he saw a ladder stretched from heaven to earth, and on it were angels ascending and descending.

He awoke from his vision astonished and afraid. Human nature can-

not come into contact with the things which belong to the other world without sensations of awe and wonder. "How dreadful is this place," was Jacob's first utterance after his vision. "Woe is me, for I am undone" was Isaiah's exclamation when he had seen the King, the Lord of Hosts. "Speak with us and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die" was the address of the Israelites to Moses when they heard God's voice on Sinai. We shrink from and tremble at the supernatural. "Surely," said Jacob, "the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. How dreadful is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." There Jacob proceeded to erect a stone and consecrate the spot as a holy place.

A Love Story

The next chapter in the life of Jacob is a love story. This is a chapter that most every life has at some period of its pilgrimage. In connection with most every love affair there is

something that happens that is humorous. This love story was not without its humorous happening. A good preacher I knew was asked one day by another preacher, if there was anything humorous in the Bible. He replied at once there was not. Whereupon the preacher who had asked the question requested him to turn to the Bible and read Genesis 29:11, at the reading of which he broke out into laughter. The passage reads: "And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept."

Jacob was ardently in love with Rachel. No young man in these modern days ever had a worse case. How many of you boys would be willing to work seven long years and receive nothing but your board and washing in order to get the girl you love? That was what Jacob did, and then was deceived at the end of the seven years, and Leah, the elder, sore-eyed, ugly sister, was put off on him instead of Rachel. He then had to contract seven more years of his labor in order to get Rachel.

And all of these years it is said seemed to him but as a few days. Love makes work easy and service a joy.

A Night of Prayer—A Prince of God

After Jacob had spent forty years in Haran, the time came for his return to the land of his father. With a large caravan he arrived at the ford Jabbok on the Jordan. Here Jacob faced another crisis in his life. News came to him of the approach of his brother Esau. He sent messengers ahead to investigate the report, and they brought back the news that Esau was coming with four hundred men. This force was sufficient to completely destroy Jacob and his household. Jacob had not forgotten the murderous look in the face of Esau the day he had been forced to flee from his father's house. He was now facing the greatest crisis of his life. What shall he do? To whom shall he go? There is none other in the hour of supreme human extremity but the Lord. And to the Lord Jacob turned.

He divided his caravan into two divisions and sent them across the Jordan, while he remained alone on the other side. As the shades of night began to envelop the earth, Jacob began to pray. The hours passed and his soul went out in exceeding agony to the Lord. His whole past life with its deeds of chicanery, trickery, and deception passed before him in panorama. The pangs of repentance pierced his soul. As he agonized a man from God came and wrestled with him. Through the watches of the early morning hours, the wrestling match went on. The angel of God plead, "Let me go." But Jacob cannot let him go. His all is at stake now. His own life and the lives of his wives and his little ones are in the balances. The cry of his soul was, "I will not let thee go, unless thou dost bless me." And just as the gray dawn began to creep over the eastern hills, the angel of God blessed him. The meeting the next day with his brother Esau was a joyous and touching one. The anger of the enraged Esau was

melted, and as Jacob approached, Esau ran to meet his brother and fell on his neck and kissed him, and the two brothers wept upon each other's faces. What a joyous illustration we have here of what prayer will do! Prayer changes things. Jacob went on his way a changed man never again to practice and foster the deception of former years of his life.

Another Crisis—The Idols Are Put Away

The next chapter of interest in the life of Jacob was in the country of Shechem. While in this land, Dinah, the only daughter of Jacob, had been seduced by one of the princes of Shechem. The Prince later endeavored to make amends, and sought the hand of Dinah in marriage. Jacob and his sons agreed to the marriage on the condition that all the males of the Shechemites be circumcised as they. To this, the men of Shechem consented, and were all circumcised. On the third day when the Shechemites were sore and disabled

from the circumcision, Simeon and Levi went into the town and murdered all of the men. Jacob was alarmed at this treachery on the part of his sons, and was brought face to face with another crisis. He said to his sons that the neighboring tribes who were friendly to the Shechemites would now likely come in and destroy them.

Again Jacob was facing the destruction of himself and all his tribe. Another great crisis has arisen. What shall he do? To whom shall he go? There is none other to whom he can go, but to the Lord. But while Jacob was now a follower of Jehovah and had put away the sinful life of his youth, he had not yet had the courage to purge his household of all their idols. Rachel had stolen her father's household gods and had brought them with her out of Haran. And no doubt others in his tribe had certain gods which they had inherited in Haran. But now Jacob calls all his household together and commands them to put away all of their idols. This they did and buried

them under a great oak tree. While there is the gradual process there are also the great epochs in the Christian experience. Jacob put away all of the idols from his household and went up to Bethel to worship. He went to Bethel where he had met God in the dream of the ladder with its angels ascending and descending. How many we see, who are Christians, who have had many providential calls and testings, and yet like Jacob they have not had the courage to put away all the idols of their lives. To this, God calls you to-day. Put away all of the idols out of your lives and come into the house of God and worship.

Gathering of his People

The next chapter we will consider in the life of Jacob will be his last years in the land of Egypt. Here God gave him a sabbath of rest seventeen years before he died. All of his household about him and the satisfaction of Joseph ruling as the premier of Egypt, added to the comfort of his old days.

We are going to look now for a moment at a death bed scene. Some people do not believe in death bed scenes, but the Bible gives us many. You will find a whole chapter in Genesis devoted to the death bed scene of Jacob. He recognizes that the end is near, and summons all of his twelve sons before him. There they stand about his bedside, twelve strong men from Reuben down to Benjamin. He gives a prophetic message to each of them, telling of their latter end. When he had finished, the scripture says that Jacob drew his feet up in the bed and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people. Who were his people unto whom he was gathered? There was Abraham, his grandfather, and Sarah, his grandmother. There was his father Isaac and his beloved mother Rebekah who had both gone on before him. Then there was Rachel his wife, the darling of his heart, whom he had buried many years ago. He was gathered unto these.

Along the transcontinental over-

land trails I have repeatedly seen the signs reading, "Life is sweet," followed by a warning of caution. "Life is sweet." It is great to live and have our homes, families, wives, children, parents, brothers, and sisters. But in the distance, in the pathway of every life, there is a river to cross. There is a dark cloud gathering down the way. There is an up-reached hand with bony fingers to fasten its ghastly clutches on all who journey here below. Life here is ever confronted with this solemn fact. But the expression "Life is sweet" will have a new and larger meaning when we are at last gathered to our people. The thought of death and sorrow will be banished forever. Who then of our people are there? Many dear to our hearts have gone on before. Oh what a gathering that will be when we shall go and be gathered to our people!

CHAPTER IX

*WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

Text: "Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas you know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For what ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that."

James 4:13-15.

The new year is a time of inventory. In every place of business during the opening days of the new year, we find the sales force engaged in the task of taking a detailed account of the stock. It is a time when profits and losses are figured, dividends declared, bonuses are awarded, and the books are balanced. Pilate said relative to the

*A sermon for the New Year.

inscription he placed on the cross of Jesus, "What I have written, I have written." As every business and industry balances the books of the old year, it is with a similar consciousness, "What I have written, I have written."

A map of the United States reveals this country threaded from end to end with overland highways, resembling the huge web of a spider. All along these great arterial thoroughfares may be found signs, markings, and mile posts guiding the traveler to his destination. Another net work of arterial thoroughfares thread this continent in the great transcontinental railway systems which link the Statue of Liberty with the Golden Gate, and the Great Lakes with the Gulf of Mexico. These great trunk lines of commerce are marked from end to end with white mile posts which are carefully numbered. These may be counted by the watch for the entertainment of tourists who ride the fast trains, or by the "weary willies" who trudge the ties, in order to get an estimate of the long

hard miles ahead of them. Another system of our commercial thoroughfares is found in our navigable rivers which, rising amid the crags of rock-ribbed mountains, go dashing over roaring cataracts, then over thundering waterfalls, then through miles of narrow and shaded canyons, then out into the open to dash against huge boulders where sunbeams tangle themselves amid the spray with all of the colors of the rainbow, then on out to quietly flow through fertile valleys where they carry upon their bosoms the cargoes of men. For hundreds of miles on the banks, where these deep and silent currents flow, may be found lamp posts with their lighted lamps to safely direct the steerage of boats in the navigable channel.

Life is a thoroughfare over which the teeming millions of earth are ever traveling. It is the trunk line to eternity. It runs from the birth chamber to the judgment throne. It is not unlike the thoroughfares of commerce, for it has its markings along the way.

The coming of every new year marks a distinctive mile post, for it finds us one year nearer the grave, one year nearer the judgment. The new year marks a time for both anticipation and reflection. The past is gone. You cannot recall it. Remorseless time hearsed the old year away at midnight and buried him amid the requiems of winter breezes. What you have written you have written. Our hope cannot longer rest in the past but in the future. Therefore we pause to consider for our profit, WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

The future is measured according to some plan. Things do not happen in this world according to chance, but according to a previous definite plan. I see men digging in the ground on a lot in a prominent business section. Do you want to know something of the future as to what will occupy that lot? If so, go to the architect's office, and there you will find minute and carefully drawn plans of a great business structure. The very photograph of the

building may be hanging on the architect's walls before it is built.

Engineers and architects lay every line of strength and beauty before their eyes before construction is undertaken. By the most exhaustive processes the Library of Congress, which cost six million dollars, was designed. The draftsmen turned out sixteen thousand sets of plans before the final plan was selected. Then the builders were ready to lift the structure which is one of the marvels of America, which covers eight acres of floor space, has forty miles of shelving, is surmounted by a dome that covers figures of science, law, poetry, philospohy, art, history, commerce, and religion—a pavilion of glory laid with gold leaf and tipped with a blazing torch.

Now human character has not been left without an architect. Human life has not been set adrift upon an uncharted sea. We have not been called to build a structure in human character without any plan or design. Jesus Christ is the great architect of

human souls. Your life has been charted in the halls of eternity, and the plan has been filed in the heavenly archives for keeping until the great day of judgment. The general pattern of our lives is found in the Sermon on the Mount. A still more specific pattern for each of our lives may be revealed through the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ has a plan for every life. Is your life fitting into the plan that God has made for you? Has there been a lack of harmony and symmetry in your life? Has the color scheme lacked a proper blending? Have the strings of your soul failed to respond to the bow of the heavenly musician? Brother, sister, it is because your life has not been fitting into the divine pattern. There is no doubt but that new year resolutions accomplish some good. But the ordinary new year resolutions are very ephemeral. They are like the dew drop which dances with all the brilliance of a diamond beneath the sunbeam of the early morning, but soon fades away. There is one deep resolve, however, which is

fundamental and will cover all the rest if you fulfill it. This is to fit your life into the plan of God.

Suppose you try a new experiment for the new year. Let Jesus Christ direct the program of your life for one year—and see how it works. Suppose you take Him as a silent partner with you in your business. Suppose you turn over to Him his proportionate earnings in the business which will be one tenth. Suppose you let Him direct your part in the work of the church this year. Many of you would take the work of the church much more seriously than you have during the past year. With many of you it has been only a kind of hit and miss proposition. Very few have been actuated by any profound conviction of the holy trust committed to you in any work of the church. Suppose you let Him outline the program in your home life. The complexity of our life to-day makes it difficult in many homes to maintain a family altar. But because of that very complexity the need is all the

greater. Brother, try the family altar in your home for one year, and see how it works. I wonder if you think you could live for one year with Jesus Christ as the director of your social life. No doubt there are many things which you feel you cannot live without which Jesus condemns. Give him a chance in the new year, and let him direct the whole of your life.

The past forecasts the future. Our past is ever held up in review in relation to our future. Go to a hospital when you are sick, and they review your past. Go to a life insurance company when you want a policy, and they review your past. Go to a business concern when you want a position and they review your past. Go into a court when you are a party to a trial, and they review your past. If you come to the bar of any ecclesiastical body seeking admission to the ministry, they review your past. The world has well learned the lesson that the past is prophetic of the future.

The marvelous inventions and dis-

coveries of recent years are prophetic of still more marvelous discoveries of the years to come. The things which only yesterday startled us as well nigh miraculous have to-day become commonplace. We stand aghast as we read the wizard-like performances in the daily papers. Our bewildered minds have come to anticipate the unusual and unheard of phenomenon, and we are now constantly inquiring "What will be next?" What of the future? No man can accurately forecast the future, but it is certain that the present day events are toward the startling and unheard of in natural phenomenon. Only in the paper of yesterday did you read of the radio being heard under the Hudson river. Ether waves penetrate thirty feet of water, sixty feet of earth, and several inches of steel, demonstrating that the radio can be used as a life line of communication by entombed miners or deep sea divers. The radio seems destined to replace the telephone. The airplane may come to take the place of the automobile. Some now con-

jecture that psychic communication may one day be possible. In that event the radio may become obsolete and when you communicate with a friend in Los Angeles, it will be by mental telepathy. Some scientists, I am told, are now claiming to be able to photograph the voice. And they tell us that our pictures reveal that our voices have different colors. When such a science is fully developed, it may become fashionable among the women to have certain colored voices, just as it is now fashionable to have a certain colored hat or dress. In such an event, it may prove no little task to the ladies to be changing their voices from season to season to keep up with the color styles in voice.

A certain law in physics tells us that every particle of matter in the physical universe continues in a state of rest or motion until attracted by some other particle. According to this law comets coming near to the earth are made to sway in their orbits, being attracted by the earth. By this law

thousands of meteors in their straying course through the heavens have been attracted by the earth, and have fallen, many of which have been picked up and are held in our museums as relics of other worlds.

This law has its analogy in human character. Every character will continue in its present state of activity or passivity unless attracted by some other character from that course. I find a man in the hill country, living many miles from the surging currents of modern life. For forty years he has plowed with a mule, "cussed," chewed tobacco, and has eaten streaked bacon. What of the future for this man? For forty years he will continue in the same routine of life, if he lives, unless some mighty regenerative power touches his life. He may continue to plow with a mule, and eat hickory smoked bacon, all of which is perfectly honorable, but the man's great need is the regeneration of his heart. The cold, sordid and tight-fisted money maker will continue his course of only making money un-

less some regenerative power comes into his life.

This world has a magnetic pole toward which the needle of every compass points. Jesus Christ is the magnetic pole of the moral world. The moral sense of every human being when normally adjusted swings toward Jesus Christ. He is the great regenerative and awakening power for the souls of men. He furnishes the most potent dynamics the world has ever known. Compare with Him all of the other dynamics which have been offered to the human race, and they are as the silvery moon to the golden sunbeams of the full orbed day. Jesus said, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me." Let us resolve to lift up Jesus Christ during the new year. He is the lily of the valley, the bright morning star. He is the fairest of ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely. He can cleanse the leper's spots. He can wash you, and make you clean. Though your sins be as scarlet, he can make you white as snow. Though you

be red like crimson, he can make you as wool. He can redeem you; he can save you; he can sanctify you, and make you holy. My brethren, let us lift up Jesus Christ. Everything else that has been lifted up in this world has met with inglorious failure from the point of redeeming men. The Son of God has never failed. In the days of His flesh he conquered death, the great arch enemy of the race. He led captivity captive by descending into hell itself and proclaiming his victory to the panic hosts of despair. He said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." Brethren, let us lift up Jesus.

Your view of life forecasts the future. Self-complacency is the ordinary view of life. Just to barely pull through life, and to propagate his kind is the great temptation of man. Only a few have any high resolve to become a benefactor to the race. Dr. F. G. Banting, of the University of Toronto, is the recent discoverer of insulin, and was only thirty years of age when he made the discovery. Insulin is being

used in the treatment of diabetes. In thirty thousand cases where the treatment is now being used, no one has died. This man is making a real contribution to knowledge which is saving thousands of human lives. Dwight L. Moody was an unschooled man of the most ordinary parts, but he made a fundamental contribution to the religious world which will never die. A great Bible school, a publishing house, and a multitude of books perpetuate his memory. George Mueller demonstrated to an unbelieving modern world how God could answer prayer. Susannah Wesley made a fundamental contribution to the world in her illustrious children. Sam Jones did more to drive the whiskey traffic from America than any man, alive or dead. Brother, God has made you different in some ways from any other human being. He has commissioned you with a specific work which no other person can do. The future is freighted with great possibilities if you will only cut some of the traditional shore lines, and break some

of the fetters of ordinary routine which bind you.

If we have never accomplished any great or worthwhile thing in life, it is high time that we make such a resolve. If you are self satisfied, it takes no prophet or fortune teller to reveal your future. It will be on the whole just about like the ordinary routine of the past. Resolve to do something different in the new year, and it may be that you will find yourself. Write a book or a poem, preach a sermon or pray a prayer, make an invention or a discovery. Do something different.

Your age is an index to the future. When Joseph presented his father, Jacob, to the king of Egypt, Pharaoh said to Jacob, "How old art thou?" And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years." Every business asks of its new employees this same question, "How old art thou?" Your present age is vitally related to your future. The American Table of Mortality gives the average expectan-

cy of life from one to ninety-five. It is on this table that the life insurance companies base their estimates in connection with every application for life insurance. If you are twenty years old, the expectancy of your life figured on an exact scientific basis is forty-two years and a fraction. If you are thirty years old, the expectancy of your life is thirty-five years and a fraction. If you are forty years old, the expectancy of your life is just twenty-eight years and a fraction. If you are fifty years, you have only twenty years and a fraction to live, according to this table. If you are sixty years old, you have only fourteen more years to live. If you are seventy, eight more years and you will be in eternity. If you are eighty, only four more years remain for you on this earth. If you are ninety-five, you have only six months to live.

How old art thou? And what have you done for your Lord? A young man said to me the other day, "I am thirty years old, and I feel like I have

never done anything. I want to do something for God." Not long ago a man told me that he had been called to preach in his younger days. "I sought to substitute for that call the profession of teaching. I have taught all of my life, and realize now that I have missed the way that God had for me. I am now fifty-three years of age, and too old for the church to accept me in the itinerant ministry. I want to do something for God the rest of my life. I don't want to make a mistake this time." My brother, what you do for God, you will have to do quickly. The night cometh when no man can work.

What of your future after this life? The span of our years is as a tale that is told. "Life is even as vapor that appeareth for a little time, and soon fadeth away," David said. "One thing I know there is but a step between me and death."

Paul could answer this question by saying, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God,

an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Every year someone has died. Some friend, neighbor, or loved one has gone across the river. The new year will be no exception. The figures of the new year will be chiselled on the grave stone of some of us. Our burial grounds keep up the record of the ages. Yea! Before the first month passes you may be dead, and the remaining months may dance their rounds upon your grave.

I call your attention to the lines of a little poem by Kathleen Wheeler, which is very expressive, as we stand at the opening of the new year.

"He came to the desk with a quivering lip;
The day was done.
'Dear teacher, I want a new leaf,' he said:
'I have spoiled this one.'
I took the old leaf, all stained and blotted;
I gave him a new one, all unspotted,

And into his sad eyes smiled:
'Do better this time, my child.'

"I came to the throne with a quivering
soul;
The year was done.
'Dear Lord, I want a new leaf,' I said;
I have spoiled this one.'
He took the old year all stained and
blotted,
And gave me a new one, all unspotted,
And into my sad soul smiled:
'Do better this time, my child.'"

CHAPTER X

THE GOD OF HOPE

Text: "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."

While visiting the Grand Canyon a few days ago, I saw the first moving pictures ever made of the canyon by the Kolb brothers. One of the pictures was that of a human skeleton lying in the depth of the Canyon. Back of that picture was an unwritten story of struggle and despair. Some heroic prospector or explorer had fallen a victim to the great dangers of the canyon and had died there alone. The picture clings to my memory because of the despair it portrayed. The world has plenty of despair and gloom if you turn and look for it. Suicides are committed every day. Men become broken in

health, disappointed in love, and fortunes are lost. Mothers become prematurely gray in their anxiety for their wayward children. Death everywhere leaves the house of mourning in its trail. It is in a world like this that Paul tells of THE GOD OF HOPE.

Hope is the mainspring that runs the world. When hope languishes, feeble hands hang low and clouds of despair cover the sky. Hope gives zest to business, zeal to religion, and eager enthusiasm to the explorer. The expression that our God is THE GOD OF HOPE is full of meaning. It gives us insight into the nature and characteristics of the God we serve. It is like a flood of sunlight emerging suddenly from behind the clouds and falling upon a green clad mountain in the distance, adding new luster and glory to the God of our faith.

The expression carries in it no note of despair. The hopeful person is a happy person. This leads us to the conclusion that our God is happy. THE GOD OF HOPE would have his child-

ren be happy. The religion of to-day has lost much of its zest for happiness. We are concerned more about a religion of duty and action. Jesus, however, had much to say about happiness. The word "blessed" means happiness. The first part of the sermon on the mount is given to a discussion of happy people. Paul's statement is, "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing." Let us not lose sight of the joy and peace which comes through believing. Our religion is sometimes more of quest than of possession. The medieval mystics were contemplative. They were often lacking in action. But along with our large modern emphasis upon action, we need a new emphasis upon the mystical elements of our religion.

Happiness does not always come through the gratification of all of our desires. The highest happiness may sometimes come through the denial of some of the fondest things which we have longed for. The story is told of a man who died, and as he supposed,

went to heaven. When he recovered consciousness, he found himself in a place where every desire could be gratified. Whatever he desired, was granted at once. But as time went on the process grew monotonous without a single refusal. The man went to the person who seemed to be in charge and registered a complaint, saying: "Your heaven is not what it is represented to be." The person in charge replied: "Sir, you are surely mistaken. The place you are in is not heaven. It is hell." This story is, of course overdrawn. But it carries a valuable moral that the gratification of all our desires does not always bring the highest happiness. Livingston denied himself of the comforts of home to pioneer the gospel among the savages of Africa. Yet who will doubt but that Livingston enjoyed a happiness far superior to any that he might otherwise have had. Self denial is the first law of love. The mother denies herself for her children and is happy in her sacrifices. Jesus said: "If any man will follow me, let him

deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

Hope means life. Jesus said: "I am come that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly." Death is the withering blight of hope. The return of health in the face of death brings new hope.

The birth of a child in the home is not a time for mourning but for gladness. A new life has come to the house full of possibilities. That life may perpetuate the family name and the family traditions. There is no family that desires the name and family traditions to become extinct. But new life is necesary to perpetuate these.

Our God is a God of life. He has created life everywhere on the face of the earth. God covered the earth with physical life before he ever placed man on the earth. From the depths of the oceans to the tops of the mountains we find life. In the rivers and in the forests there is life. The atmosphere which is an ocean of air surrounding the earth is abundantly inhabited with

life. The crowning work of God's creation in the earth was man. He created man a living soul as well as having a physical being. The grand purpose of God was for man to live forever in beautiful fellowship with Him. Man broke this fellowship by sin. Spiritual death ensued. It is not God's desire that men should live in spiritual death. He is a God of life. He would have all men walk in beautiful harmony and fellowship with Him. New spiritual life brings new hope. Behold, how many lives have been transformed and changed by the coming of new life and this glorious hope. The spiritually blind have been made to see and the lame to walk. Deaf ears have been unstopped and palsied hands have been made whole. Drunkards have been made sober and harlots have been transformed to lives of chastity. Crooked paths have been made straight, and days of remorse have been turned into days of rejoicing.

With the new life in God comes a blessed and glorious hope. This hope

furnishes the grandest and most exalted conception of life that the world has ever known. The world has many religions, but none is so full of promise as the Christian faith. The transforming power of the Christian faith weights "the life that now is and the life to come" with new and glorious possibilities. New meaning is given to the present life. New ambitions and aspirations are awakened. The mountain youth back in the rural section of the country attends a revival meeting. He hears the gospel preached in the demonstration and power of the Spirit. His soul is touched as he hears the earnest messages from night to night. As he goes to his country home after the services, the very stars of the heavens seem to be calling to his soul. God's Spirit is striving with him. These things are upon his mind after he retires at night. The next night he goes to the revival, heeds the invitation, and goes to an old fashioned altar of prayer. There he surrenders his life to God. A new and glorious hope has

come into his life. This hope leads him to aspire for all of the best that life can offer. He has a new ambition for an education that his life may prove a larger benediction to the world. He has no money and the door seems to be closed to his obtaining an education. But driven by the power of this blessed hope which has come into his life, he works his way through college, overcomes the obstacles, and goes out to a life of large usefulness and blessing. There are multitudes of people in this country to-day, occupying positions of high honor and trust, who would be unknown and unheard of, had not their lives been touched by the transforming power of the Christ.

The hope born of the Christian faith will aspire for better homes, better schools, and better agriculture. I recently visited two communities in Missouri in a certain rural section which were scenes of my early childhood. When I was a boy, these communities maintained strong churches. Large crowds attended the regular

preaching services, and great revivals of religion were held each year. In these communities most of the people were converted and united with the church at an early age. But to-day all of this has changed. The churches in a large measure have been abandoned. The cemeteries have been allowed to grow up in brush and go into disrepair. I visited one old church which had been entirely disbanded and had been turned over to the habitation of bats and owls. The old church had been the scene of many a great revival. I am personally acquainted with a goodly number of preachers, teachers, lawyers, and doctors who were converted at the altar of this old church. To-day they have gone out over the land to bless the world, but the old church stands abandoned with closed doors. Along with the spiritual decline in these communities there has gone a corresponding economic decline. I saw field after field that was once rich and productive that has now gone into complete disrepair and grown up in brush. The land that

is cultivated is no longer productive as in former years. Crops have not been properly rotated and the soil has been robbed of its fertility. The standards of the people as a whole are lower than that of thirty or forty years ago.

The church has lost a supreme opportunity in these communities. The revival fires should have been kept burning. The old time revivals with their call to repentance and righteousness should never have been abandoned. The churches should have been made centers for the life of the communities. They should have lent a helping hand in promoting short schools of agriculture for the farmers, and every other movement for the uplift and betterment of rural life. God's plan is to give men a larger outlook upon every worthy phase of human life.

THE GOD OF HOPE is a God of Variety. Variety is a stimulus to hope. The universe about us which God has created presents untold variety. The seasons of the year, widely different, come and go. The spring comes with

beautiful verdure, the song of birds and fragrant flowers. Summer comes with fields that are filled with growing crops, and orchards and vineyards laden with luscious fruits. Autumn comes with forest of gold and brown, blended with many colors, when both field and forest yield their final harvests. Hoary winter comes at last carpeting the earth with snow, when families gather with cheer and laughter about the fireside through the long winter evenings. Variety is found in the seasons and climate in different parts of the earth. Perennial snows are found upon the mountains while eternal spring blooms in the tropics. We have the glaciers of the far north and the deserts of the southwest. Man can find upon the earth every conceivable kind of climate. These change with each section of the country. Even the leaves of the same flora or forest vary.

Man needs variety and God has made ample provision for this need. Physicians have learned that a change

is valuable treatment for many physical maladies. Your doctor says: "You need a change. Take a trip. Go to the mountains, go to the seashore, or visit your relatives." A change often awakens new hope and brings new life to the physical body.

The new life in Christ is not a round of monotony as some have supposed. The land of spiritual promise for the soul is an enchanted land. It is ever new and changing. There is always something different and better further on. There are hills in the distance that we have not yet climbed. There are vast vistas upon which our eyes have not yet fallen. There are rivers bordered with outstretching plains which we have not yet crossed. The glory of the Christian life is one of constant enlargement and unfolding grandeur. Each new experience gives added faith, hope, and love.

Another element which fans the flame of hope is friendship. Friends make us hopeful and happy. A loss of a true friend brings disappointment

and sometimes despair. THE GOD OF HOPE is a friend of man. God loves men and seeks their fellowship. Abraham was a friend of God. God communed and talked with the patriarchs and prophets, and we are thankful that he still communes with men. There is an old book that still speaks the message of God. The world has not outgrown this book nor it never will. We can go aside to a quiet place with this old book when the clouds cover the sky. As we read its pages, we can find a message for our discouraged hearts. We can kneel alone and have a talk with Him who is invisible. Before we rise from our knees there is a rent in the clouds, and the sun is shining. THE GOD OF HOPE is our friend who is sufficient in every hour of need.

He is the friend that never faileth, "a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." Earthly friends disappoint us. They sometimes fail us in the hour of greatest need. But God remains the same unchanging friend of man

through all the ages. His arm is strong to lift our burdens. His comfort is sweet to soothe our aching hearts. His presence is sufficient to banish every fear. His promises form a bow of hope, lifting up the eyes of the discouraged and turning their feet toward the sunlit hills of the future. O Thou blessed God of Hope, friend of man, comforter of discouraged and broken hearts, we worship and adore Thee.

Our God is a great God. His power is infinite. He stretches out the heavens as a scroll and maketh the earth his foot stool. He touches the mountains with His fingers and they smoke with volcanic heat. He maketh the earth to tremble and the seas to roar. He tosses the lightnings from His fingers and spans the infinite spaces with the light of His stars. He maketh the sun beams His messengers, and the winds and the waves to obey His will. In the eighth Psalm, David says: "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. . .When

I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained: what is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visiteth him?" If the Psalmist had closed with these last words, we might interpret them to mean that man is a poor weak worm of the dust. But consider the answer which the Psalmist gives to his own question concerning man: "For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"

The excellency of God's name and the majesty of all his works proclaim Him as THE GOD OF HOPE. He is a God of great tasks and He challenges man with great tasks. The challenge

of a great and noble task may be the harbinger of a blessed hope. The race moves upward in the scale of progress in proportion as man responds to the challenge of great tasks.

The challenge of God's material universe leads man on many a hopeful and fruitful adventure. Great rivers have been spanned with strong girders of steel. Great areas of malaria infested swamp lands have been drained and made healthful and as productive as the valley of the Nile. Vast stretches of burning desert have been flooded with water and made to blossom as the rose. What was once considered a vast world has been knit into a neighborhood by ever increasing means of transportation and communication. He has harnessed steam, and has put bits in the lightnings, and has made them do his bidding. He has charted the seas with ship and compass, and has spanned the oceans with his voice. He has made the ether waves carry his messages afar. The call of the winged bird has lifted his feet from the earth,

and he has circumnavigated the globe in the mid-heavens.

What more shall we say of the response of man to the challenge of God in material things? Science has wrought much for the human body. Many of the deadly plagues which were once scourges to whole cities have been subdued. Yellow fever, small pox and cholera no longer stalk unhindered with their bony tread. The dreaded diseases of tuberculosis and diabetes are no longer the incurable plagues which they once were. Even many cures are now being effected of the dreaded disease of cancer through the use of radium. The surgeon's knife has wrought wonders in these modern times. Today there is not a single organ of the human body on which the surgeon's knife has not been used for the prolongation of human life. After surgery had mastered the technique for the use of the knife on all organs of the abdomen, the organs of the chest were still thought to be inoperable. But surgery next invaded the chest, using the knife

with satisfactory results on all organs except the heart. When surgery had proceeded thus far, men said it can proceed no further. They said that the heart is the seat of life itself which can never be touched. But on May 20th, 1923, two doctors, Cutler and Levine, exposed a beating human heart, and thrust a small knife through the wall, making a small opening through which more blood could pass. The patient was a girl twelve years of age who had been propped up in bed with pillows all of her life. If she moved the blood would back up in her lungs and choke her to death. After the delicate operation by the skilled surgeons, the girl became normal, going in and out about the daily tasks of life.

The challenge of God to man in the realm of the spiritual is even greater than that within the realm of the material. The saving of human souls is even a bigger business than the saving of human bodies. The body is temporal; the soul is eternal. Human redemption through Christ our Lord, is

the glorious task which God has committed to men. John Wesley said: "The world is my parish." Jesus said: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." In addition to commanding them to preach, He commanded them to teach, and to heal. The gospel is to minister to every phase of human life. No knight of old ever went forth on so glorious a crusade as do the sons of God as they go forth to the conquest of the world for their Lord. What glorious hope is this—the making of the kingdoms of this world the kingdoms of Lord and Christ! Let us press this Christian warfare on every battle front. The flag under which we march is stained with hallowed blood. Our captain knows no defeat. Let us press the battle until "the knowledge of the Lord covers the earth as the waters that cover the sea."

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Sons of God

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